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THE EVIL EYE;

OR,

THE BLACK SPECTRE.

A ROMANCE.

BY WILLIAM CARLETON,

AUTHOR OF "TALES AND STORIES OF THE IRISH PEASANTRY," 'VALENTINE M'CLUTCHY," "WILLY REILLY," "THE BLACK BARONET," 'JANE, SINCLAIR," "THE TITHE PROCTOR," "THE BROKEN PLEDGE," &c.

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TO

EDWARD AND ANTHONY FOX,

THIS VOLUME

IS RESPECTFULLY AND AFFECTIONATELY INSCRIBED,

AS AN ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF THE MANY ACTS OF KINDNESS, WHICH I HAVE FROM TIME TO TIME RECEIVED AT THEIR HANDS:

AND

PERHAPS WHEN THEY AND I SHALL BE IN THE DUST,

THEIR DESCENDANTS,

EVEN UPON THE STRENGTH OF THIS HUMBLE TESTIMONY,

WILL FEEL PROUD OF THOSE VIRTUES,

WHICH IN THE COURSE OF TIME AND YEARS MIGHT HAVE BEEN OTHERWISE FORGOTTEN.

WILLIAM CARLETON.

PREFACE.

THERE is very little to be said about this book in the shape of a preface. The superstition of the Evil Eye is, and has been, one of the most general that ever existed among men. It may puzzle philosophers to ask why it prevails wherever mankind exist. There is not a country on the face of the earth where a belief in the influence of the Evil Eye does not prevail. In my own young days it was a settled dogma of belief. I have reason to know, however, that, like other superstitions, it is fast fading out of the public mind. Education and knowledge will soon banish those idle and senseless superstitions: indeed, it is a very difficult thing to account for their existence at all. I think some of them have come down to us from the times of the Druids,—a class of men whom, excepting what is called their human sacrifices, I respect. My own opinion is, that what we term human sacrifices was nothing but their habitual mode of executing criminals. Toland has written on the subject and left us very little the wiser. Who could, after all, give us information upon a subject which to us is only like a dream?

What first suggested the story of the Evil Eye to me was this: A man named Case, who lives within a distance of about three or four hundred yards of my residence, keeps a

large dairy; he is the possessor of five or six and twenty of the finest cows I ever saw, and he told me that a man who was an enemy of his killed three of them by his overlooking them,—that is to say, by the influence of the Evil Eye.

The opinion in Ireland of the Evil Eye is this: that a man or woman possessing it may hold it harmless, unless there is some selfish design or some spirit of vengeance to call it into operation. I was aware of this, and I accordingly constructed my story upon that principle. I have nothing further to add: the story itself will detail the rest.

CONTENTS.

CHAPTER		PAGE
I.	—SHORT AND PRELIMINARY	1
II.	—A MURDERER'S WAKE AND THE ARRIVAL OF A STRANGER	15
III.	—THE BREAKFAST NEXT MORNING.—WOODWARD, ON HIS WAY HOME, MEETS A STRANGER.—THEIR CONVERSATION	40
IV.	—WOODWARD MEETS A GUIDE.—HIS RECEPTION AT HOME.—PREPARATIONS FOR A FÊTE	59
V.	—THE BONFIRE.—THE PRODIGY	85
VI.	—SHAWN-NA-MIDDOGUE.—SHAN-DHINNE-DHUV, OR THE BLACK SPECTRE.	109
VII.	—A COUNCIL OF TWO.—VISIT TO BEECHGROVE.—THE HERBALIST	134
VIII.	—A HEALING OF THE BREACH.—A PROPOSAL FOR MARRIAGE ACCEPTED	161
IX.	—CHASE OF THE WHITE HARE.	184
X.	—TRUE LOVE DEFEATED	207
XI.	—A CONJURER'S LEVEE	230
XII.	—FORTUNE-TELLING	259
XIII.	—WOODWARD IS DISCARDED FROM MR. GOODWIN'S FAMILY.—OTHER PARTICULARS OF IMPORTANCE	283
XIV.	—SHAWN-NA-MIDDOGUE STABS CHARLES LINDSAY IN MISTAKE FOR HIS BROTHER	307
XV.	—THE BANSHEE.—DISAPPEARANCE OF GRACE DAVOREN	329
XVI.	—A HOUSE OF SORROW.—AFTER WHICH FOLLOWS A COURTING SCENE	348

CHAPTER PAGE

XVII.—DESCRIPTION OF THE ORIGINAL TORY.—THEIR MANNER OF SWEARING 371

XVIII.—THE TOIR, OR TORY-HUNT 390

XIX.—PLANS AND NEGOTIATIONS 412

XX.—WOODWARD'S VISIT TO BALLYSPELLAN . . 435

XXI.—THE DINNER AT BALLYSPELLAN.—THE APPEARANCE OF WOODWARD.—VALENTINE GREATRAKES 451

XXII.—HISTORY OF THE BLACK SPECTRE . . 473

XXIII.—GREATRAKES AT WORK.—DENOUEMENT . . 494

THE EVIL EYE;

OR,

THE BLACK SPECTRE.

CHAPTER I.

SHORT AND PRELIMINARY.

In a certain part of Ireland, inside the borders of the county of Waterford, lived two respectable families, named Lindsay and Goodwin, the former being of Scotch descent. Their respective residences were not more than three miles distant; and the intimacy that subsisted between them was founded, for many years, upon mutual good-will and esteem, with two exceptions only in one of the families, which the reader will understand in the course of our narrative. Each ranked in the class known as that of the middle gentry. These two neighbors—one of whom, Mr. Lindsay, was a magistrate—were contented with their lot in life, which was sufficiently respectable and independent to secure to them that true happiness which is most frequently annexed to the middle station. Lindsay was a man of a kind and liberal heart, easy and passive in his nature, but with a good deal of sarcastic humor, yet neither severe nor prejudiced, and, consequently, a

popular magistrate as well as a popular man. Goodwin might be said to possess a similar disposition; but he was of a more quiet and unobtrusive character than his cheerful neighbor. His mood of mind was placid and serene, and his heart as tender and affectionate as ever beat in a human bosom. His principal enjoyment lay in domestic life—in the society, in fact, of his wife and one beautiful daughter, his only child, a girl of nineteen when our tale opens. Lindsay's family consisted of one son and two daughters; but his wife, who was a widow when he married her, had another son by her first husband, who had been abroad almost since his childhood, with a grand-uncle, whose intention was to provide for him, being a man of great wealth and a bachelor.

We have already said that the two families were upon the most intimate and friendly terms; but to this there was one exception in the person of Mrs. Lindsay, whose natural disposition was impetuous, implacable, and overbearing; equally destitute of domestic tenderness and good temper. She was, in fact, a woman whom not even her own children, gifted as they were with the best and most affectionate dispositions, could love as children ought to love a parent. Utterly devoid of charity, she was never known to bestow a kind act upon the poor or distressed, or a kind word upon the absent. Vituperation and calumny were her constant weapons; and one would imagine, by the frequency and bitterness with which she wielded them, that she was in a state of perpetual warfare with society. Such, indeed, was the case; but the evils which resulted from her wanton and indefensible aggressions upon pri-

vate character almost uniformly recoiled upon her own head; for, as far as her name was known, she was not only unpopular, but odious. Her husband was a man naturally fond of peace and quietness in his own house and family; and, rather than occasion anything in the shape of domestic disturbance, he continued to treat her intemperate authority sometimes with indifference, sometimes with some sarcastic observation or other, and occasionally with open and undisguised contempt. In some instances, however, he departed from this apathetic line of conduct, and turned upon her with a degree of asperity and violence that was as impetuous as it was decisive. His reproaches were then general, broad, fearful; but these were seldom resorted to unless when her temper had gone beyond all reasonable limits of endurance, or in defence of the absent or inoffensive. It mattered not, however, what the reason may have been, they never failed to gain their object at the time; for the woman, though mischievous and wicked, ultimately quailed, yet not without resistance, before the exasperated resentment of her husband. Those occasional victories, however, which he gained over her with reluctance, never prevented her from treating him, in the ordinary business of life, with a systematic exhibition of abuse and scorn. Much of this he bore, as we have said; but whenever he chose to retort upon her with her own weapons in their common and minor skirmishes, she found his sarcasm too cool and biting for a temper so violent as hers, and the consequence was, that nothing enraged her more than to see him amuse himself at her expense.

This woman had a brother, who also lived in the

same neighborhood, and who, although so closely related to her by blood, was, nevertheless, as different from her in both character and temper as good could be from evil. He was wealthy and generous, free from everything like a worldly spirit, and a warm but unostentatious benefactor to the poor, and to such individuals as upon inquiry he found to be entitled to his beneficence. His wife had, some years before, died of decline, which, it seems, was hereditary in her family. He felt her death as a calamity which depressed his heart to the uttermost depths of affliction, and from which, indeed, he never recovered. All that remained to him after her demise was a beautiful little girl, around whom his affections gathered with a degree of tenderness that was rendered almost painful by the apprehension of her loss. Agnes, from her eighth or ninth year, began to manifest slight symptoms of the same fatal malady which had carried away her mother. These attacks filled his heart with those fearful forebodings, which, whilst they threw him into a state of terror and alarm, at the same time rendered the love he bore her such as may be imagined, but cannot be expressed. It is only when we feel the probability of losing a beloved object that the heart awakens to a more exquisite perception of its affections for it, and wonders, when the painful symptoms of disease appear, why it was heretofore unconscious of the full extent of its love. Such was the nature of Mr. Hamilton's feelings for his daughter, whenever the short cough or hectic check happened to make their appearance from time to time, and foreshadow, as it were, the certainty of an early death; and then he should be childless—

a lonely man in the world, possessing a heart overflowing with affection, and yet without an object on which he could lavish it, as now, with happiness and delight. He looked, therefore, upon decline as upon an approaching foe, and the father's heart became sentinel for the welfare of his child, and watched every symptom of the dreaded disease that threatened her, with a vigilance that never slept. Under such circumstances we need not again assure our readers that his parental tenderness for this beautiful girl—now his "only one," as he used to call her—was such as is rare even in the most affectionate families; but in this case the slight and doubtful tenure which his apprehensions told him he had of her existence raised his love of her almost to idolatry. Still she improved in person, grace, and intellect; and although an occasional shadow, as transient as that which passes over and makes dim the flowery fields of May or April, darkened her father's heart for a time, yet it passed away, and she danced on in the light of youthful happiness, without a single trace of anxiety or care. Her father's affection for her was not, however, confined to herself; on the contrary, it passed to and embraced every object that was dear to her—her favorite books, her favorite playthings, and her favorite companions. Among the latter, without a single rival, stood her young friend, Alice Goodwin, who was then about her own age. Never was the love of sisters greater or more beautiful than that which knit the innocent hearts of those two girls together. Their affections, in short, were so dependent upon each other that separation and absence became a source of anxiety and uneasiness to

each. Neither of them had a sister, and, in the fervor of their attachment, they entered into a solemn engagement that each of them should consider herself the sister of the other. This innocent experiment of the heart—for such we must consider it in these two sisterless girls—was at least rewarded by complete success. A new affinity was superadded to friendship, and the force of imagination completed what the heart begun.

Next to Agnes was Alice Goodwin awarded a place in Mr. Hamilton's heart. 'Tis true he had nieces; but in consequence of the bitter and exasperating temper of their mother, who was neither more nor less than an incendiary among her relations, he had not spoken to her for years; and this fact occasioned a comparative estrangement between the families. Sometimes, however, her nieces and she visited, and were always upon good terms; but Agnes's heart had been preoccupied; and even if it had not, the heartless predictions of her aunt, who entertained her with the cheering and consoling information that "she had death in her face," and that "she knew from the high color of her cheek that she would soon follow her mother," would have naturally estranged the families. Now, of this apprehension, above all others, it was the father's wish that Agnes should remain ignorant; and when she repeated to him, with tears in her eyes, the merciless purport of her aunt's observations, he replied, with a degree of calm resentment which was unusual to him,

"Agnes, my love, let not anything your aunt may say alarm you in the least; she is no prophetess, my dear child. Your life, as is that of all his creatures, is in the hands of God who gave it. I know her avari-

cious and acrimonious disposition—her love of wealth, and her anxiety to aggrandize her family. As it is, she will live to regret the day she ever uttered those cruel words to you, my child. You shall visit at your uncle's no more. Whenever the other members of her family may please to come here, we shall receive them with kindness and affection; but I will not suffer you to run the risk of listening to such unfeeling prognostications in future."

In the meantime her health continued in a state sufficiently satisfactory to her father. It is true an occasional alarm was felt from time to time, as a slight cold, accompanied with its hard and unusual cough, happened to supervene; but in general it soon disappeared, and in a brief space she became perfectly recovered, and free from every symptom of the dreadful malady.

In this way the tenor of her pure and innocent life went on, until she reached her sixteenth year. Never did a happier young creature enjoy existence—never lived a being more worthy of happiness. Her inseparable and bosom friend was Alice Goodwin, now her sister according to their artless compact of love. They spent weeks and months alternately with each other; but her father never permitted a day to pass without seeing her, and every visit filled his happy spirit with more hopeful anticipations.

At this period it occurred to him to have their portraits drawn, and on hearing him mention this intention, their young hearts were ecstatic with delight.

"But, papa," said Agnes, "if you do I have a favor to ask of you."

"Granted, Agnes, if it be possible."

"O, quite possible, papa; it is to get both our portraits painted in the same frame, for, do you know, I don't think I could feel happy if Alice's portrait was separated from mine.

"It shall be done, darling—it shall be done."

And it *was* done, accordingly; for what father could refuse a request founded upon an affection so tender and beautiful as theirs?

Agnes has now entered her seventeenth year—but how is this? Why does her cheek begin to get alternately pale and red? And why does the horizon of the father's heart begin to darken? Alas! it is so—the spoiler is upon her at last. Appetite is gone—her spirits are gone, unless in these occasional ebullitions of vivacity which resemble the lightnings which flash from the cloud that is gathering over her. It would be painful to dwell minutely upon the history of her illness—upon her angelic patience and submission to the will of God, and upon the affection, now consecrated by approaching death into something sacred, which she exhibited to her father and Alice. The latter was never from her during the progress of that mournful decline. The poor dying girl found all the tenderest offices of love and friendship anticipated. Except heaven she had scarcely anything to wish for. But who can even imagine the hopeless agony of her father's soul? She had been the single remaining plank which bore him through a troubled ocean to a calm and delightful harbor; but now she is going down, leaving him to struggle, weak and exhausted for a little, and then the same dark waves will cover them both.

At length the dreadful hour arrived—the last slight spasm of death was over, and her spotless soul passed into heaven from the bereaved arms of her hopeless and distracted father, who was reduced by the depth and wildness of despair to a state of agony which might wring compassion from a demon.

On the morning of her interment, Alice, completely prostrated by excess of grief and watching, was assisted to bed, being unable to accomplish even the short distance to her father's house, and for nearly a fortnight serious doubts were entertained of her recovery. Her constitution, however, though not naturally strong, enabled her to rally, and in three weeks' time she was barely able to go home to her family. On the day following Mr. Hamilton called to see her —a task to which, under the dreadful weight of his sorrow, he was scarcely equal. He said he considered it, however, his duty, and he accordingly went. His visit, too, was very short, nor had he much to say, and it was well he had not; for he could by no exertion have summoned sufficient fortitude for a lengthened conversation on a subject arising from the loss of a child so deeply beloved.

"Alice," said he, "I know the arrangement entered into between you—and—and——"

Here he was overcome, and could not for a few minutes maintain sufficient calmness to proceed, and poor Alice was almost as deeply affected as himself. At last he strove to go on.

"You know," he resumed, "the agreement I allude to. You were to be sisters, and you *were* sisters. Well, my dear Alice, for *her* sake, as well as for your

own, and as *she* looked upon you in that affectionate light, the contract between you, as far as it now can be done, shall be maintained. Henceforth you are *my daughter*. I adopt you. All that she was to have shall be yours, reverting, however, should you die without issue, to my nephew, Henry Woodward; and should he die childless, to his brother, Charles Lindsay; and should he die without offspring, then to my niece Maria. I have arranged it so, and have to say that, except the hope of meeting my child in death, it is now the only consolation left me. I am, I know, fulfilling her wishes; and, my dear Alice, you will relieve my heart—my broken heart—by accepting it."

"O, would to God," replied Alice, sobbing bitterly, "that I could give a thousand times as much to have our beloved Agnes back again! I have now no sister! Alas! alas! I have now no sister!"

"Ah, my child," he replied, "for now I will call you so, *your* grief, though deep and poignant, will pass away in time, but mine will abide with me whilst I stay here. That period, however, will not be long; the prop of my existence, the source of my happiness, is gone; and I will never know what happiness is until I rejoin her and her blessed mother. Good-by, my daughter; I will have neither reply nor remonstrance, nor will I be moved by any argument from this my resolution."

He then passed out of the house, entered his carriage with some difficulty, and proceeded home with a heart considerably relieved by what he had done.

It was in vain that Alice and her father *did* subsequently remonstrate with him upon the subject. He

refused to listen to them, and said his determination was immovable.

"But," he added, "if it be any satisfaction to you to know it, I have not forgotten my relations, to whom I have left the legacies originally intended for them. I would have left it directly to Henry Woodward, were it not that his grasping mother sent him to another relation, from whom she calculated that he might have larger expectations; and I hope he may realize them. At all events, my relatives will find themselves in exactly the same position as if our beloved Agnes had lived."

Mr. Hamilton, then advanced in years—for Agnes might be termed the child of his old age—did not survive her death twelve months. That afflicting event fairly broke him down. Death, however, to him had no terrors, because he had nothing to detain him here. On the contrary, he looked to it only as a release from sorrow; an event that would soon wipe away all tears from his eyes, draw the sting of affliction from his heart, and restore him once more to his beloved Agnes and her dear mother. He looked forward only to close his eyes against the world and sleep with *them*—and so he did.

When his will was opened, the astonishment and dismay of his relations may be easily imagined, as well as the bitterness of their disappointment. The bequeathal of the bulk of his property to a stranger, who could urge no claim of consanguinity upon him, absolutely astonished them; and their resentment at his caprice—or rather what they termed his dotage—was not only deep, but loud. To say the truth, such an

unexpected demise of property was strongly calculated to try their temper. After the death of Agnes—an event which filled the unfeeling and worldly heart of her aunt with delight—they made many a domestic calculation, and held many a family council as to the mode in which their uncle's property might be distributed among them, and many anticipations were the result, because there was none in the usual descent of property to inherit it but themselves. Now, in all this they acted very naturally—just, perhaps, as you or I, gentle reader, would act if placed in similar circumstances, and sustained by the same expectations.

In the meantime matters were not likely to rest in quiet. Murmurs went abroad, hints were given, and broader assertions advanced, that the old man had not been capable of making a will, and that his mind had been so completely disordered and prostrated by excessive grief for the loss of his daughter, that he became the dupe and victim of undue influence in the person of a selfish and artful girl—that artful girl being no other than Alice Goodwin, aided and abetted by her family. Every circumstance, no matter how trivial, that could be raked up and collected, was now brought together, and stamped with a character of significance, in order to establish *his* dotage and *their* fraud. It is not necessary to dwell upon this. In due time the matter came to a trial, for the will had been disputed, and, after a patient hearing, its validity was completely established, and all the hopes and expectations of the Lindsays blown into air.

In the meantime, and while the suit was pending, the conduct of Alice was both generous and disinter-

ested. She pressed her parents to allow her, under the peculiar circumstances of the case, to renounce the bequest, inasmuch as she thought that Mr. Hamilton's relatives had a stronger and prior claim. This, however, they peremptorily refused to do.

"I care not for money," said her father, "nor have I much to spare; but you must consider, my dear Alice, that the act upon the part of Mr. Hamilton was a spontaneous demise of his own property, as a reward to you on behalf of his daughter, for the affection which you bore her, and which subsisted between you. You were her nurse, her friend, her sister; you tended her night and day during her long illness, even to the injury of your health, and almost at the risk of your very life. Suppose, for instance, that Mr. Hamilton had had male heirs; in that case, the Lindsays would have been just as they are, perhaps not so well; for he might not have left them even a legacy. Then, they unjustly tax us with fraud, circumvention, and the practice of undue influence; and, indeed, have endeavored to stamp an indelible stain upon your character and honor. Every man, my dear, as the proverb has it, is at liberty to do what he pleases with his own, according to his free will, and a reasonable disposition. Let me hear no more of this, then, but enjoy with gratitude that which God and your kind friend have bestowed upon you."

We need not assure our readers that the Lindsays henceforth were influenced by an unfriendly feeling toward the Goodwins, and that all intercourse between the families terminated. On the part of Mrs. Lindsay, this degenerated into a spirit of the most

intense hatred and malignity. To this enmity, however, there were exceptions in the family, and strong ones, too, as the reader will perceive in the course of the story.

Old Lindsay himself, although he mentioned the Goodwins with moderation, could not help feeling strongly and bitterly the loss of property which his children had sustained, owing to this unexpected disposition of it by their uncle. Here, then, were two families who had lived in mutual good-will and intimacy, now placed fronting each other in a spirit of hostility. The Goodwins felt indignant that their motives should be misinterpreted by what they considered deliberate falsehood and misrepresentation; and the Lindsays could not look in silence upon the property which they thought ought to be theirs, transferred to the possession of strangers, who had wheedled a dotard to make a will in their favor. Such, however, in thousands of instances, are the consequences of the

"Opes irritamenta malorum."

The above facts, in connection with these two families, and the future incidents of our narrative, we have deemed it necessary, for the better understanding of what follows, to place in a preliminary sketch before our readers.

CHAPTER II.

A MURDERER'S WAKE AND THE ARRIVAL OF A STRANGER.

It is the month of June, and the sun has gone down amidst a mass of those red and angry clouds which prognosticate a night of storm and tempest. The air is felt to be oppressive and sultry, and the whole sky is overshadowed with gloom. On such a night the spirit sinks, cheerfulness abandons the heart, and an indefinable anxiety depresses it. This impression is not peculiar to man, who, on such occasions, is only subject to the same instinctive apprehension which is known to influence the irrational animals. The clouds are gathering in black masses; but there is, nevertheless, no opening between them through which the sky is visible. The gloom is unbroken, and so is the silence; and a person might imagine that the great operations of Nature had been suspended and stood still. The outlying cattle betake them to shelter, and the very dogs, with a subdued and timid bark, seek the hearth, and, with ears and tail hanging in terror, lay themselves down upon it as if to ask protection from man. On such a night as this we will request the reader to follow us toward a district that trenches upon the foot of a dark mountain, from whose precipitous sides masses of gray rock, apparently embedded in heath and fern, protrude themselves in uncouth and gigantic shapes. 'Tis true they were not then visible;

but we wish the reader to understand the character of the whole scenery through which we pass. We diverge from the highway into a mountain road, which resembles the body of a serpent when in motion, going literally up one elevation, and down another. To the right, deep glens, gullies, and ravines; but the darkness with which they are now filled is thick and impervious to the eye, and nothing breaks the silence about us but the rush of the mountain torrent over some jutting precipice below us. To the left all is gloom, as it would be even were there light to guide the sight, because on that side spreads a black, interminable moor. As it is we can see nothing; yet as we get along we find that we are not alone. Voices reach our ears; but they are not, as usual, the voices of mirth or laughter. These which we hear—and they are not far from us—are grave and serious; the utterance thick and low, as if those from whom they proceed were expressing a sense of sympathy or horror. We have now advanced up this rugged path about half a mile from the highway we have mentioned, and discovered a light which will guide us to our destination. As we approach the house the people are increasing in point of numbers; but still their conversation is marked by the same strange and peculiar character. Perhaps the solemn depth of their voices gains something by the ominous aspect of the sky; but, be this as it may, the feeling which it occasions fills one with a different and distinct sense of discomfort. We ourselves feel it, and it is not surprising; for, along this wild and rugged path of darkness, we are conducting the reader to the wake of a murderer.

We have now arrived within fifty yards of the house, which, however, we cannot see, for nothing but a solitary light is visible. But, lo! a flash of lightning! and there for a moment is the whole rugged and savage scenery revealed. The huge, pointed mountains, the dreary wastes, the wild, still glens, the naked hills of granite, and the tremendous piles of rocks, ready, one would think, to crash down from the positions where they seem to hang, if only assailed by a strong gale of wind—these objects, we say, were fearful and startling in themselves; but the sensations which they produced were nothing in comparison with the sight of an unpainted deal coffin which stood near the door, against the side wall of the house. The appearance of a coffin, but especially at night, is one that casts a deep shadow over the spirits, because it is associated with death, of which it is the melancholy and depressing exponent; but to look upon it by such an awful though transient light as that which proceeds from the angry fires of heaven, and to reflect upon the terrible associations of blood and crime which mingle themselves with that of a murderer, is a dreadful but wholesome homily to the heart. We now enter the house of death, where the reader must suppose himself to be present, and shall go on to describe the scene which presents itself.

On entering, we found the house nearly crowded; but we could observe that there were very few of the young and light-hearted present, and scarcely any females, unless those who were related to the family of the deceased, or to himself. The house was low and long, and the kitchen in which they had laid him out

was spacious, but badly furnished. Altogether its destitution was calculated to deepen the sense of awe which impressed those who had come to spend the night with the miserable widow and wailing orphans of the murderer.

The unfortunate man had been executed that morning after having acknowledged his crime, and, as the laws of that period with respect to the interment of the convicted dead were not so strict as they are at present, the body was restored to his friends, in order that they might bury it when and where they wished. The crime of the unhappy man was deep, and so was that which occasioned it. His daughter, a young and beautiful girl, had been seduced by a gentleman in the neighborhood who was unmarried; and that act of guilt and weakness on her part was the first act that ever brought shame upon the family. All the terrible passions of the father's heart leaped into action at the ruin of his child, and the disgrace which it entailed upon his name. The fury of domestic affection stimulated his heart, and blazed in his brain even to madness. His daughter was obliged to fly with her infant and conceal herself from his vengeance, though the unhappy girl, until the occurrence of that woful calamity, had been the solace and the sunshine of his life. The guilty seducer, however, was not doomed to escape the penalty of his crime. Morrissey—for that was the poor man's name—cared not for law; whether it was to recompense him for the degradation of his daughter, or to punish him for inflicting the vengeance of outraged nature upon the author of her ruin. What compensation could satisfy his heart for the infamy entailed upon her and him? what paltry

damages from a jury could efface her shame or restore her innocence? Then, the man was poor, and to the poor, under such circumstances, there exists no law, and, consequently, no redress. He strove to picture to himself his beautiful and innocent child; but he could not bear to bring the image of her early and guiltless life near him. The injury was irreparable, and could only be atoned for by the blood of the destroyer. He could have seen her borne shameless and unpolluted to the grave, with the deep, but natural, sorrow of a father; he could have lived with her in destitution and misery; he could have begged with her through a hard and harsh world; he could have seen her pine in want; moan upon the bed of sickness; nay, more, he could have seen her spirit pass, as it were, to the God who gave it, so long as that spirit was guiltless, and her humble name without spot or stain; yes, he could have witnessed and borne all this, and the blessed memory of her virtues would have consoled him in his bereavement and his sorrow. But to reflect that she was trampled down into guilt and infamy by the foot of the licentious libertine, was an event that cried for blood; and blood he had, for he murdered the seducer, and that with an insatiable rapacity of revenge that was terrible. He literally battered the head of his victim out of all shape, and left him a dead and worthless mass of inanimate matter. The crime, though desperate, was openly committed, and there were sufficient witnesses at his trial to make it a short one. On that morning, neither priest, nor friar, nor chaplain, nor jailer, nor sheriff could wring from him one single expression of regret or repentance for what he had

done. The only reply he made them was this—"Don't trouble me; I knew what my fate was to be, and will die with satisfaction."

After cutting him down, his body, as we have said, was delivered to his friends, who, having wrapped it in a quilt, conveyed it on a common car to his own house, where he received the usual ablutions and offices of death, and was composed upon his own bed into that attitude of the grave which will never change.

The house was nearly filled with grave and aged people, whose conversation was low, and impressed with solemnity, that originated from the painful and melancholy spirit of the event that had that morning taken place. A deal table was set lengthwise on the floor; on this were candles, pipes, and plates of cut tobacco. In the usual cases of death among the poor, the bed on which the corpse is stretched is festooned with white sheets, borrowed for the occasion from the wealthier neighbors. Here, however, there was nothing of the kind. The associations connected with murder were too appalling and terrible to place the rites required, either for the wake or funeral of the murderer, within the ordinary claims of humanity for these offices of civility to which we have alluded. In this instance none of the neighbors would lend sheets for what they considered an unholy purpose; the bed, therefore, on which the body lay had nothing to ornament it. A plain drugget quilt was his only covering, but he did not feel the want of a better.

It was not the first time I had ever seen a corpse; but it was the first time I had ever seen that of a murderer. I looked upon it with an impression which it

is difficult, if not impossible, to describe. I felt my nerves tingle, and my heart palpitate. To a young man, fresh, and filled with the light-hearted humanity of youth, approximation to such an object as then lay before me is a singular trial of feeling, and a painful test of moral courage. The sight, however, and the reflections connected with it, rendered a long contemplation of it impossible, and, besides, I had other objects to engage my attention. I now began to observe the friends and immediate connections of the deceased. In all, there were only seven or eight women, including his wife. There were four boys and no daughters; for, alas! I forgot to inform the reader that his fallen daughter was his only one; a fact which, notwithstanding his guilt, must surely stir up the elements of our humanity in mitigation of his madness.

This house of mourning was, indeed, a strange, a solemn, and a peculiar one. The women sat near the bed upon stools, and such other seats as they had prepared. The wife and his two sisters were rocking themselves to and fro, as is the custom when manifesting profound sorrow in Irish wakehouses; the other women talked to each other in a low tone, amounting almost to a whisper. Their conduct was marked, in fact, by a grave and mysterious monotony; but after a little reflection, it soon became painfully intelligible. Here was shame, as well as guilt and sorrow—here was shame endeavoring to restrain sorrow; and hence the silence, and the struggle between them which it occasioned. The wife from time to time turned her heavy eyes upon the countenance of the corpse; and after the first sensations of awe had departed from me,

I ventured to look upon it with a purpose of discovering in its features the lineaments of guilt. Owing to the nature of his death, that collapse which causes the flesh to shrink almost immediately after the spirit has departed was not visible here. The face was rather full and livid, but the expression was not such as penitence or a conviction of crime could be supposed to have left behind it. On the contrary, the whole countenance had somewhat of a placid look, and the general contour was unquestionably that of affection and benevolence.

It was easy, however, to perceive that this agonizing restraint upon the feelings of that loving wife could not last long, and that the task which the poor woman was endeavoring to perform in deference to the conventional opinions of society was beyond her strength. Hers, indeed, was not a common nor an undivided sorrow; for, alas, she had not only the loss of her kind husband and his ignominious death to distract her, but the shame and degradation of their only daughter which occasioned it; and what a trial was that for a single heart! From time to time a deep back-drawing sob would proceed from her lips, and the eye was again fixed upon the still and unconscious features of her husband. At length the chord was touched, and the heart of the wife and mother could restrain itself no longer. The children had been for some time whispering together, evidently endeavoring to keep the youngest of them still; but they found it impossible—he must go to awaken his daddy. This was too much for them, and the poor things burst out into an uncontrollable wail of sorrow. The conversation among the spectators was immediately

hushed; but the mother started to her feet, and turning to the bed, bent over it, and raised a cry of agony such as I never heard nor hope ever to hear again. She clapped her hands, and rocking herself up and down over him, gave vent to her accumulated grief, which now rushed like a torrent that had been dammed up and overcome its barriers, from her heart.

"O Harry," said she in Irish—but we translate it—"O Harry, the husband of the kind heart, the loving father, and the good man! O Harry, Harry, and is it come to this with you and me and our childre! They may say what they will, but you're *not* a murderer. It was your love for our unfortunate Nannie that made you do what you did. O, what was the world to you without *her!* Wasn't she the light of your eyes, and the sweet pulse of your loving heart! And did ever a girl love a father as she loved you, till the destroyer came across her—ay, the destroyer that left us as we now are, sunk in sorrow and misery that will never end in this world more! And now, what is she, and what has the destroyer made her? O, when I think of how you sought after her you loved as you did, to take her life, and when I think of how she that loved you as she did was forced to fly from the hand that would pluck out your own heart sooner than injure a hair of her head—so long as she was innocent—O, when I think of all this, and look upon you lying there now, and all for the love you bore her, how can my heart bear it, and how can I live. O, the destroyer, the villain! the devil! what has he wrought upon us! But, thank God, he is punished—the father's love punished him. They are liars! you are no murderer. The mother's heart within

me tells me that you did what was right—you acted like a man, my husband. God bless you, and make your soul happy for its love to Nannie. I'll kiss you, Harry—I'll kiss you, my heart's treasure, for your noble deed—but O Harry, you don't know the lips of sorrow that kiss you now. Sure they are the lips of your own Rose, that gave her young heart to you, and was happy for it. Don't feel ashamed, Harry; it's a good man's case to die the death you did, and be at rest, as I hope you are, for you are not a murderer; and if you are, it is only in the eye of the law, and it was your love for Nannie that did it."

This woful dirge of the mother's heart, and the wife's sorrow, had almost every eye in tears; and, indeed, it was impossible that the sympathy for her should not be deep and general. They all knew the excellence and mildness of her husband's character, and that every word she uttered concerning him was truth.

In Irish wakehouses, it is to be observed, the door is never closed. The heat of the house, and the crowding of the neighbors to it, render it necessary that it should be open; but independently of this, we believe it is a general custom, as it is also to keep it so during meals. This last arises from the spirit of hospitality peculiar to the Irish people.

When his wife had uttered the words "you are no murderer," a young and beautiful girl entered the house in sufficient time to have heard them distinctly. She was tall, her shape was of the finest symmetry, her features, in spite of the distraction which, at a first glance, was legible in them, were absolutely fascinating. They all knew her well; but the moment she

made her appearance, the conversation, and those expressions of sympathy which were passing from one to another, were instantly checked; and nothing now was felt but compassion for the terrible ordeal that they knew was before her mother. She rushed up to where her mother had sat down, her eyes flashing, and her long brown hair floating about her white shoulders, which were but scantily covered.

"You talk of a murderer, mother," she exclaimed. "You talk of a murderer, do you? But if murder has been committed, as it has, *I*—*I* am the murderer. Keep back now, let me look upon my innocent father—upon that father that *I* have murdered."

She approached the bed on which he lay, her eyes still flashing, and her bosom panting, and there she stood gazing upon his features for about two minutes.

The silence of the corpse before them was not deeper than that which her unexpected presence occasioned. There she stood gazing on the dead body of her father, evidently torn by the pangs of agony and remorse, her hands clenching and opening by turns, her wild and unwinking eyes riveted upon those moveless features, which his love for her had so often lit up with happiness and pride. Her mother, whc was alarmed, shocked, stunned, gazed upon her, but could not speak. At length she herself broke the silence.

"Mother," said she, "I came to see my father, for I know he won't strike me now, and he never did. O, no, because I ran away from him and from all of you, but not till after I had deserved it; before that I was safe. Mother, didn't my father love me once better

than his own life? I think he did. O, yes, and I returned it by murdering him—by sending him—that father there that loved me so well—by—by sending him to the hangman—to a death of disgrace and shame. That's what *his own Nannie*, as he used to call me, did for him. But no shame—no guilt to you, father; the shame and the guilt are *your own Nannie's*, and that's the only comfort I have; for you're happy, what I will never be, either in this world or the next. You are now in heaven; but you will never see your own Nannie *there*."

The recollections caused by her appearance, and the heart-rending language she used, touched her mother's heart, now softened by her sufferings into pity for her affliction, if not into a portion of the former affection which she bore her.

"O Nannie, Nannie!" said she, now weeping bitterly upon a fresh sorrow, "don't talk that way—don't, don't; you have repentance to turn to; and for what you've done, God will yet forgive you, and so will your mother. It was a great crime in you; but God can forgive the greatest, if his own creatures will turn to him with sorrow for what they've done."

She never once turned her eyes upon her mother, nor raised them for a moment from her father's face. In fact, she did not seem to have heard a single syllable she said, and this was evident from the wild but affecting abstractedness of her manner.

"Mother!" she exclaimed, "that man they say is a murderer, and yet *I* am not worthy to touch him. Ah! I'm alone now—altogether alone, and *he—he* that loved me, too, was taken away from me by a cruel

death—ay, a cruel death; for it was barbarous to kill him as if he was a wild beast—ay, and without one moment's notice, with all his sins upon his head. He is gone—he is gone; and there lies the man that murdered him—there he lies, the sinner; curse upon his hand of blood that took him I loved from me! O, my heart's breakin' and my brain is boilin'! What will I do? Where will I go? Am I mad? Father, my curse upon you for your deed of blood! I never thought I'd live to curse you; but you don't hear me, nor know what I suffer. Shame, disgrace—ay, and I'd bear it all for *his* sake that you plunged, like a murderer, as you were, into eternity. How does any of you know what it is to love as I did? or what it is to lose the man you love by a death so cruel? And this hair that *he* praised so much, who will praise it or admire it now, when he is gone? Let it go, too, then. I'll not keep it on me—I'll tear it off—off!"

Her paroxysm had now risen to a degree of fury that fell little, if anything, short of insanity—temporary insanity it certainly was. She tore her beautiful hair from her head in handfuls, and would have proceeded to still greater lengths, when she was seized by some of those present, in order to restrain her violence. On finding that she was held fast, she looked at them with blazing eyes, and struggled to set herself free; but on finding her efforts vain, she panted deeply three or four times, threw back her head, and fell into a fit that, from its violence, resembled epilepsy. After a lapse of ten minutes or so, the spasmodic action, having probably wasted her physical strength, ceased, and she lay in a quiet trance; so quiet, indeed, that it might have

passed for death, were it not for the deep expression of pain and suffering which lay upon her face, and betrayed the fury of the moral tempest which swept through her heart and brain. All the mother's grief now was hushed—all the faculties of her soul were now concentrated on her daughter, and absorbed by the intense anxiety she felt for her recovery. She sat behind the poor girl, and drew her body back so that her head rested on her bosom, to which she pressed her, kissing her passive lips with streaming eyes.

"O, darling Nannie!" she exclaimed, "strive and rouse yourself; it is your loving mother that asks you. Waken up, poor misled and heart-broken girl, waken up; I forgive you all your errors. O, avillish machree (sweetness of my heart), don't you hear that it is your mother's voice that's spakin' to you!"

She was still, however, insensible; and her little brothers were all in tears about her.

"O mother!" said the oldest, sobbing, "is Nannie dead too? When she went away from us you bid us not to cry, that she would soon come back; and now she has only come back to die. Nannie, I'm your own little Frank; won't you hear *me!* Nannie, will you never wash my face of a Sunday morning more? will you never comb down my hair, put the pin in my shirt collar,and kiss me, as you used to do before we went to Mass together?"

The poor mother was so much overcome by this artless allusion to her innocent life, involving, as it did, such a manifestation of affection, that she wept until fairly exhausted, after which she turned her eyes up

to heaven and exclaimed, whilst her daughter's inanimate body still lay in her arms,

"O Lord of mercy, will you not look down with pity and compassion on me this night!"

In the course of about ten minutes after this her daughter's eyes began to fill with those involuntary tears which betoken in females recovery from a fit; they streamed quietly, but in torrents, down her cheek. She gave a deep sigh, opened her eyes, looked around her, first with astonishment, and then toward the bed with a start of horror.

"Where am I?" said she.

"You are with me, darlin'," replied the mother, kissing her lips, and whispering, "Nannie, I forgive you—I forgive you; and whisper, your father did before he went to death."

She smiled faintly and sorrowfully in her mother's face, and said, "*Mother, I didn't know that.*" After which she got up, and proceeding to the bed, she fell upon his body, kissed his lips, and indulged in a wild and heart-breaking wail of grief. This evidently afforded her relief, for she now became more calm and collected.

"Mother," said she, "I must go."

"Why, sure you won't leave us, Nannie?" replied the other with affectionate alarm.

"O, I must go," she repeated; "bring me the children till I see them once—Frank first."

The mother accordingly brought them to her, one by one, when she stooped down and kissed them in turn, not without bitter tears, whilst they, poor things, were all in an uproar of sorrow. She then approached her

mother, threw herself in her arms, and again wept wildly for a time, as did that afflicted mother along with her.

"Mother, farewell," said she at length—"farewell; think of me when I am far away—think of your unfortunate Nannie, and let every one that hears of my misfortune think of all the misery and all the crime that may come from one false and unguarded step."

"O, Nannie darling," replied her mother, "don't desert us now; sure you wouldn't desert your mother now, Nannie?"

"If my life could make you easy or happy, mother, I could give it for your sake, worthless now and unhappy as it is; but I am going to a far country, where my shame and the misfortunes I have caused will never be known. I must go, for if I lived here, my disgrace would always be before you and myself; then I would soon die, and I am not yet fit for death."

With these words the unhappy girl passed out of the house, and was never after that night seen or heard of, but once, in that part of the country.

In the meantime that most pitiable mother, whose afflicted heart could only alternate from one piercing sorrow to another, sat down once more, and poured forth a torrent of grief for her unhappy daughter, whom, she feared, she would never see again.

Those who were present, now that the distressing scene which we have attempted to describe was over, began to chat together with more freedom.

"Tom Kennedy," said one of them, accosting a good-natured young fellow, with a clear, pleasant eye, "how are all your family at Beech Grove? Ould

Goodwin and his pretty daughter ought to feel themselves in good spirits after gaining the lawsuit in the case of Mr. Hamilton's will. They bate the Lindsays all to sticks."

"And why not," replied Kennedy; "who had a betther right to dispose of his property than the man that owned it? and, indeed, if any one livin' desarved it from another, Miss Alice did from him. She nearly brought herself to death's door, in attending upon and nursing her sister, as she called poor Miss Agnes; and, as for her grief at her death, I never saw anything like it, except"—he added, looking at the unfortunate widow—"where there was blood relationship."

"Well, upon my sowl," observed another, "I can't blame the Linsdays for feeling so bittherly about it as they do. May I never see yestherday, if a brother of mine had property, and left it to a stranger instead of to his own—that is to say, my childre—I'd take it for granted that he was fizzen down stairs for the same. It was a shame for the ould sinner to *scorn* his own relations for a stranger."

"Well," said another, "one thing is clear—that since he did blink them about the property, it could'nt get into betther hands. Your master, Tom, is the crame of a good landlord, as far as his property goes, and much good may it do him and his! I'll go bail that, as far as Miss Alice herself is consarned, many a hungry mouth will be filled, many a naked back covered, and many a heavy heart made light through the manes of it."

"Faith," said a third spokesman, "and that wouldn't be the case if that skinflint barge of Lindsay's had got

it in her clutches. At any rate, it's a shame for her and them to abuse the Goodwins as they do. If ould Hamilton left it to them surely it wasn't their fault."

"Never mind," said another, "I'll lay a wager that Mrs. Lindsay's son—I mane the step-son that's now abroad with the uncle—will be sent for, and a marriage will follow between him and Miss Goodwin."

"It may be so," replied Tom, "but it's not very probable. I know the man that's likely to walk into the property, and well worthy he is of it."

"Come, Tom, let us hear who is the lucky youth?"

"Family saicrets," replied Tom, "is not to be revaled. All I can say is, that he is a true gentleman. Give me another blast o' the pipe, for I must go home."

Tom, who was servant to Mr. Goodwin, having now taken his "blast," wished them good-night; but before he went he took the sorrowing widow's cold and passive hand in his, and said, whilst the tears stood in his eyes,

"May God in heaven pity you and support your heart, for you are the sorely tried woman this miserable night!"

He then bent his steps to Beech Grove, his master's residence, the hour being between twelve and one o'clock.

The night, as we have already said, had been calm, but gloomy and oppressive. Now, however, the wind had sprung up, and, by the time Kennedy commenced his journey home, it was not only tempestuous but increasing in strength and fury every moment. This, however, was not all;—the rain came down in torrents, and was battered against his person with such force

that in a few moments he was drenched to the skin. So far, it was wind and rain—dreadful and tempestuous as they were. The storm, however, was only half opened. Distant flashes of lightning and sullen growls of thunder proceeded from the cloud masses to the right, but it was obvious that the thunderings above them were only commencing their deep and terrible pealings. In a short time they increased in violence and fury, and resembled, in fact, a West Indian hurricane more than those storms which are peculiar to our milder climates. The tempest-voice of the wind was now in dreadful accordance with its power. Poor Kennedy, who fortunately knew every step of the rugged road along which he struggled and staggered, was frequently obliged to crouch himself and hold by the projecting crags about him, lest the strength of the blast might hurl him over the rocky precipices by the edges of which the road went. With great difficulty, however, and not less danger, he succeeded in getting into the open highway below, and into a thickly inhabited country. Here a new scene of terror and confusion awaited him. The whole neighborhood around him were up and in alarm. The shoutings of men, the screams of women and children, all in a state of the utmost dread and consternation, pierced his ears, even through the united rage and roaring of the wind and thunder. The people had left their houses, as they usually do in such cases, from an apprehension that if they remained in them they might be buried in their ruins. Some had got ladders, and attempted, at the risk of their lives, to secure the thatch upon the roofs by placing flat stones, sods, and such other materials, as

by their weight, might keep it from being borne off like dust upon the wings of the tempest. Their voices, and screams, and lamentations, in accordance, as they were, with the uproar of the elements, added a new feature of terror to this dreadful tumult. The lightnings now became more vivid and frequent, and the pealing of the thunder so loud and near, that he felt his very ears stunned by it. Every cloud, as the lightnings flashed from it, seemed to open, and to disclose, as it were, a furnace of blazing fire within its black and awful shroud. The whole country around, with all its terrified population running about in confusion and dismay, were for the moment made as clear and distinct to the eye as if it were noonday, with this difference, that the scene borrowed from the red and sheeted flashes a wild and spectral character which the light of day never gives. In fact, the human figures, as they ran hurriedly to and fro, resembled those images which present themselves to the imagination in some frightful dream. Nay, the very cattle in the fields could be seen, in those flashing glimpses, huddled up together in some sheltered corner, and cowering with terror at this awful uproar of the elements. It is a very strange, but still a well-known fact, that neither man nor beast wishes to be alone during a thunder-storm. Contiguity to one's fellow-creatures seems, by some unaccountable instinct, to lessen the apprehension of danger to one individual when it is likely to be shared by many, a feeling which makes the coward in the field of battle fight as courageously as the man who is naturally brave.

The tempest had not yet diminished any of its pow-

er; so far from that, it seemed as if a night-battle of artillery was going on, and raging still with more violence in the clouds. Thatch, doors of houses, glass, and almost everything light that the winds could seize upon, were flying in different directions through the air; and as Kennedy now staggered along the main road, he had to pass through a grove of oaks, beeches, and immense ash trees that stretched on each side for a considerable distance. The noises here were new to him, and on that account the more frightful. The groanings of the huge trees, and the shrieking of their huge branches as they were crushed against each other, sounded in his ears like the supernatural voices of demons, exulting at their participation in the terrors of the storm. His impression now was that some guilty sorcerer had raised the author of evil, and being unable to lay him, the latter was careering in vengeance over the earth until he should be appeased by the life of some devoted victim—for such, when a storm more than usually destructive and powerful arises, is the general superstition of the people—at least it was so among the ignorant in our early youth.

In all thunder-storms there appears to be a regular gradation—a beginning, a middle, and an end. They commence first with a noise resembling the crackling of a file of musketry where the fire runs along the line, man after man; then they increase, and go on deepening their terrors until one stunning and tremendous burst takes place, which is the acme of the tempest. After this its power gradually diminishes in the same way as it increased—the peals become less loud and less frequent, the lightning feebler and less brilliant,

until at length it seems to take another course, and after a few exhausted volleys it dies away with a hoarse grumble in the distance.

Still it thundered and thundered terribly; nor had the sweep of the wind-tempest yet lost any of its fury. At this moment Kennedy discovered, by a succession of those flashes that were lighting the country around him, a tall young female without cloak or bonnet, her long hair sometimes streaming in the wind, and sometimes blown up in confusion over her head. She was proceeding at a tottering but eager pace, evidently under the influence of wildness and distraction, or rather as if she felt there was something either mortal or spectral in pursuit of her. He hailed her by her name as she passed him, for he knew her, but received no reply. To Tom, who had, as the reader knows, been a witness of the scene we have described, this fearful glimpse of Nannie Morrissey's desolation and misery, under the pelting of the pitiless storm and the angry roar of the elements, was distressing in the highest degree, and filled his honest heart with compassion for her sufferings.

He was now making his way home at his utmost speed, when he heard the trampling of a horse's feet coming on at a rapid pace behind him, and on looking back he saw a horseman making his way in the same direction with himself. As he advanced, the repeated flashes made them distinctly visible to each other.

"I say," shouted the horseman at the top of his lungs, "can you direct me to any kind of a habitation, where I may take shelter?"

"Speak louder," shouted Tom; "I can't hear you for the wind."

The other, in a voice still more elevated, repeated the question, "I want to get under the roof of some human habitation, if there be one left standing. I feel that I have gone astray, and this is no night to be out in."

"Faith, sir," again shouted Tom, "it's pure gospel you're spakin', at any rate. A habitation! Why, upon my credibility, they'd not deserve a habitation that 'ud refuse to open the door for a dog on such a night as this, much less to a human creature with a sowl to be saved. A habitation! Well, I think I can, and one where you'll be well treated. I suppose, sir, you're a gentleman?"

"Speak out," shouted the traveller in his turn; "I can't hear you."

Tom shaded his mouth with his hand, and shouted again, "I suppose, sir, you're a gentleman?"

"Why, I suppose I am," replied the stranger, rather haughtily.

"Becaise," shouted Tom, "devil a traneen it 'ud signify to them I'm bringing you to whether you are or not. The poorest man in the parish would be sheltered as well as you, or maybe a betther man."

"Are we near the house?" said the other.

"It's just at hand, sir," replied Tom, "and thanks be to God for it; for if ever the devil was abroad on mischief, he is this night, and may the Lord save us! It's a night for a man to tell his grandchildre about, and he may call it the 'night o' the big storm.'"

A lull had now taken place, and Tom heard a laugh

from the stranger which he did not much relish; it was contemptuous and sarcastic, and gave him no very good opinion of his companion. They had now arrived at the entrance-gate, which had been blown open by the violence of the tempest. On proceeding toward the house, they found that their way was seriously obstructed by the fall of several trees that had been blown down across it. With some difficulty, however, they succeeded in reaching the house, where, although the hour was late, they found the whole family up, and greatly alarmed by the violence of the hurricane. Tom went in and found Mr. and Mrs. Goodwin in the parlor, to both of whom he stated that a gentleman on horseback, who had lost his way, requested shelter for the night.

"Certainly, Kennedy, certainly; why did you not bring the gentleman in? Go and desire Tom Stinton to take his horse to the stable, and let him be rubbed down and fed. In the meantime, bring the gentleman in."

"Sir," said Tom, going to the bottom of the hall door-steps, "will you have the goodness to walk in; the masther and misthress are in the parlor; for who could sleep on such a night as this?"

On entering he was received with the warmest and most cordial hospitality.

"Sir," said Mr. Goodwin, "I speak in the name of myself and my wife when I bid you heartily welcome to whatever my roof can afford you, especially on such an awful night as this. Take a seat, sir; you must want refreshment before you put off those wet clothes and betake yourself to bed, after the dreadful severity of such a tempest."

"I have to apologize, sir, for this trouble," replied the stranger, "and to thank you most sincerely for the kindness of the reception you and your lady have given to an utter stranger."

"Do not mention it, sir," said Mr. Goodwin; "come, put on a dry coat and waistcoat, and, in the meantime, refreshments will be on the table in a few minutes. The servants are all up and will attend at once.

The stranger refused, however, to change his clothes, but in a few minutes an abundant cold supper, with wine and spirits, were placed upon the table, to all of which he did such ample justice that it would seem as if he had not dined that day. The table having been cleared, Mr. Goodwin joined him in a glass of hot brandy and water, and succeeded in pressing him to take a couple more, whilst his wife, he said, was getting a bed and room prepared for him. Their chat for the next half hour consisted in a discussion of the storm, which, although much abated, was not yet over. At length, after an intimation that his room was ready for him, he withdrew, accompanied by a servant, got into an admirable bed, and in a few minutes was fast asleep.

CHAPTER III.

BREAKFAST NEXT MORNING.—WOODWARD, ON HIS WAY HOME, MEETS A STRANGER.—THEIR CONVERSATION.

THE next morning he joined the family in the breakfast parlor, where he was received with much kindness and attention. The stranger was a young man, probably about twenty-seven, well made, and with features that must be pronounced good; but, from whatever cause it proceeded, they were felt to be by no means agreeable. It was impossible to quarrel with, or find fault with them; their symmetry was perfect; the lips well defined, but hard and evidently unfeeling; his brows, which joined each other, were black, and, what was very peculiar, were heaviest where they met —a circumstance which, notwithstanding the regularity of his other features, gave him, unless when he smiled, a frowning if not a sinister aspect. That, however, which was most remarkable in his features was the extraordinary fact that his eyes were each of a different color, one being black and piercing in its gleam, and the other gray; from which circumstance he was known from his childhood by the name of *Harry na Suil Gloir*—Suil Gloir being an epithet always bestowed by the Irish upon persons who possessed eyes of that unnatural character. This circumstance, however, was not observed on that occasion by any of the family. His general manners, though courteous, were

cold, and by no means such as were calculated either to bestow or inspire confidence. His language, too, was easy enough when he spoke, but a cold habit of reserve seemed to permeate his whole being, and to throw a chill upon the feelings of those to whom he addressed himself. So much was this the case that whenever he assumed an air of familiarity a dark, strange, and undefinable spirit, which was strongly felt, seemed not only to contradict his apparent urbanity, but to impress his auditors with a sense of uneasiness sometimes amounting to pain—an impression, however, for which they could not at all account.

"Sir," said Mr. Goodwin, "I hope you slept well after what you suffered under the tempest of last night?"

"I assure you, sir, I never enjoyed a sounder night's sleep in my life," replied their guest; "and were it not for the seasonable shelter of your hospitable roof I know not what would have become of me. I am unacquainted with the country, and having lost my way, I knew not where to seek shelter, for the night was so dreadfully dark that unless by the flashes of the lightning nothing could be seen."

"It was certainly an awful—a terrible night," observed his host; "but come, its severity is now past; let me see you do justice to your fare;—a little more ham?"

"Thank you, sir," replied the other; "if you please. Indeed, I cannot complain of my appetite, which is at all times excellent"—and he certainly corroborated the truth of his statement by a sharp and vigorous attack upon the good things before him.

"Sir," said Mrs. Goodwin, "we feel happy to have had the satisfaction of opening our doors to you last night; and there is only one other circumstance which could complete our gratification."

"The gratification, madam," he replied, "as well as the gratitude, ought to be all on my side, although I have no doubt, and can have none, that the consciousness of your kindness and hospitality are equally gratifying on yours. But may I ask to what you allude, madam?"

"You are evidently a gentleman, sir, and a stranger, and we would feel obliged by knowing—"

"O, I beg your pardon, madam," he replied, interrupting her; "I presume that you are good enough to flatter me by a wish to know the name of the individual whom your kindness and hospitality have placed under such agreeable obligations. For my part I have reason to bless the tempest which, I may say, brought me under your roof. 'It is an ill wind,' says the proverb, 'that blows nobody good;' and it is a clear case, my very kind hostess, that at this moment we are mutually ignorant of each other. I assure you, then, madam, that I am not a knight-errant travelling in disguise and in quest of adventure, but a plain gentleman, by name Woodward, step-son to a neighbor of yours, Mr. Lindsay, of Rathfillan House. I need scarcely say that I am Mrs. Lindsay's son by her first husband. And now, madam, may I beg to know the name of the family to whom I am indebted for so much kindness."

Mrs. Goodwin and her husband exchanged glances, and something like a slight cloud appeared to over-

shadow for a moment the expression of their countenances. At length Mr. Goodwin spoke,

"My name, sir," he proceeded, "is Goodwin; and until a recent melancholy event, your family and mine were upon the best and most cordial terms; but, unfortunately, I must say that we are not so now—a circumstance which I and mine deeply regret. You must not imagine, however, that the knowledge of your name and connections could make the slightest difference in our conduct toward you on that account. Your family, Mr. Woodward, threw off our friendship and disclaimed all intimacy with us; but I presume you are not ignorant of the cause of it."

"I should be uncandid if I were to say so, sir. I am entirely aware of the cause of it; but I cannot see that there is any blame whatsoever to be attached to either you or yours for the act of my poor uncle. I assure you, sir, I am sorry that my family failed to consider it in its proper light; and you will permit me to request that you will not identify my conduct with theirs. So far as I, at least am concerned, my uncle's disposition of his property shall make no breach nor occasion any coolness between us. On the contrary, I shall feel honored by being permitted to pay my respects to you all, and to make myself worthy of your good opinions."

"That is generously spoken, Mr. Woodward," replied the old man; "and it will afford us sincere pleasure to reciprocate the sentiments you have just expressed."

"You make me quite happy, sir," replied Woodward, bowing very courteously. "This, I presume,

is the young lady to whom my cousin Agnes was so much attached?"

"She is, sir," replied her father.

"Might I hope for the honor of being presented to her, Mr. Goodwin?"

"With pleasure, sir. Alice, my dear, although you already know who this gentleman is, yet allow me, nevertheless, to present him to you."

The formal introduction accordingly took place, after which Woodward, turning to Mrs. Goodwin, said,

"I am not surprised, madam, at the predilection which my cousin entertained for Miss Goodwin, even from what I see; but I feel that I am restrained by her presence from expressing myself at further length. I have only to say that I wish her every happiness, long life, and health to enjoy that of which she seems, and I am certain is, so worthy."

He accompanied those words with a low bow and a very gracious smile, after which, his horse having been brought to the door, he took his leave with a great deal of politeness, and rode, according to directions received from Mr. Goodwin, toward his father's house.

After his departure the family began to discuss his character somewhat to the following effect:

"That is a fine young man," said Mr. Goodwin, "liberal-minded and generous, or I am much mistaken. What do *you* think, Martha?" he added, addressing his wife.

"Upon my word," replied that lady, "I am much of your opinion—yet I don't know either; although

polite and courteous, there is something rather disagreeable about him."

"Why," inquired her husband, "what is there disagreeable about him? I could perceive nothing of the sort; and when we consider that his uncle, who left this property to Alice, was his mother's brother, and that as he was nephew by blood as well as by law, and that it was the old man's original intention that the property should go directly to him, or in default of issue, to his brother—I think when we consider this, Martha, that we cannot but entertain a favorable impression of him, considering what he has lost by the unexpected turn given to his prospects in consequence of his uncle's will. Alice, my dear, what is your opinion of him?"

"Indeed, papa," she replied, "I have had—as we all have had—but a very slight opportunity to form any opinion of him. As for me, I can judge only by the impressions which his conversation and person have left upon me."

"Well, and anything favorable or otherwise?"

"Anything at all *but* favorable, papa—I experienced something like pain during breakfast, and felt a strong sense of relief the moment he left the room."

"Poor child, impressions are nothing. I have met men of whom first impressions were uniformly unfavorable, who, notwithstanding their rough outsides, were persons of sterling worth and character."

"Yes, papa, and men of great plausibility and ease of manner, who, on the contrary, were deep, hypocritical and selfish when discovered and their hearts laid open. As regards Mr. Woodward, however, heaven

forbid that I should place the impressions of an ignorant girl like myself against the knowledge and experience of a man who has had such opportunites of knowing the world as you. All I can say is, that whilst he seemed to breathe a very generous spirit, my impressions were completely at variance with every sentiment he uttered. Perhaps, however, I do him injustice—and I should regret that very much. I will then, in deference to your opinion, papa, endeavor to control those impressions and think as well of him as I can."

"You are right, Alice, and I thank you. We should never, if possible, suffer ourselves to be prematurely ungenerous in our estimate of strangers, especially when we know that this world is filled with the most absurd and ridiculous prejudices. How do you know, my dear child, that yours is not one of them?"

"Alice, love," said her mother, "I think, upon reflection, your father is right, as he always is; let us not be less generous than this young man, and you know it *would* be ungenerous to prejudge him; and this comes the more strange from you, my love, inasmuch as I never yet heard you express a prejudice almost against any person."

"Because I don't remember, mamma, that I ever felt such an impression—prejudice—call it what you will—against any individual as I do against this man. I absolutely fear him without knowing why."

"Precisely so, my dear Alice," replied her father, "precisely so; and, as you say, *without knowing why.* In that one phrase, my child, you have defined *prejudice* to the very letter. Fie, Alice; have more sense,

my dear; have more sense. Dismiss this foolish prejudice against a young man, who, from what he said at breakfast, is entitled to better feelings at your hands."

"As I said, papa, I shall certainly strive to do so."

Alice Goodwin's person and character must, at this stage of our narrative, be made known to our readers. As to her person, it is only sufficient to say that she was a tall, beautiful girl, of exceeding grace and wonderful proportions. There was, however, a softness about her appearance of constitutional delicacy that seemed to be incompatible with a strong mind, or perhaps we should rather say that was identical with an excess of feeling. This was exhibited in the tenderness of her attachment to Agnes Hamilton, and in the agonizing grief which she experienced at her death—a grief which had wellnigh become fatal to a girl of her fragile organization. The predominant trait, however, in her character was timidity and a terror of a hundred trifles, which, in the generality of her sex, would occasion only indifference or laughter. On that very morning, for instance, she had not recovered from her painful apprehensions of the thunder-storm which had occurred on the preceding night. Of thunder, but especially of lightning, she was afraid even to pusillanimity; indeed so much so, that on such occurrences she would bind her eyes, fly down stairs, and take refuge in the cellar until the hurly-burly in the clouds was over. This, however, was not so much to be wondered at by those who live in our present and more enlightened days; as our readers will admit when they are told that the period of our narrative is in the reign of that truly religious monarch,

Charles the Second, who, conscious of his inward and invisible grace, was known to exhaust himself so liberally of his virtue, when touching for the Evil, that there was very little of it left to regulate that of his own private life. In those days Ireland was a mass of social superstitions, and a vast number of cures in a variety of diseases were said to be performed by witches, wizards, fairy-men, fairy-women, and a thousand other impostors, who, supported by the gross ignorance of the people, carried that which was first commenced in fraud and cunning into a self-delusion, which, in process of time, led them to become dupes to their own impostures. It is not to be wondered at, then, that Alice Goodwin, a young creature of a warm imagination and extraordinary constitutional timidity, should feel the full force of the superstitions which swarmed around her, and impregnated her fancy so strongly that it teemed with an unhealthy creation, which frequently rendered her existence painful by a morbid apprehension of wicked and supernatural influences. In other respects she was artlessness itself, could never understand what falsehood meant, and, as to truth, her unspotted mind was transparent as a sunbeam. Our readers are not to understand, however, that though apparently flexible and ductile, she possessed no power of moral resistance. So very far from that, her disposition, wherever she thought herself right, was not only firm and unbending, but sometimes rose almost to obstinacy. This, however, never appeared, unless she considered herself as standing upon the basis of truth. In cases where her judgment was at fault, or when she could not see her way, she

was a perfect child, and, like a child, should be taken by the hand and supported. It was, however, when mingling in society that her timidity and bashfulness were most observable; these, however, were accompanied with so much natural grace, and unaffected innocence of manner, that the general charm of her whole character was fascinating and irresistible; nay, her very weaknesses created an atmosphere of love and sympathy around her that nobody could breathe without feeling her influence. Her fear of ghosts and fairies, her dread of wizards and witches, of wise women and strolling conjurers, with the superstitious accounts of whom the country then abounded, were, in the eyes of her more strong-minded friends, only a source of that caressing and indulgent affection which made its artless and innocent object more dear to them. Every one knows with what natural affection and tenderness we love the object which clings to us for support under the apprehension of danger, even when we ourselves are satisfied that the apprehension is groundless. So was it with Alice Goodwin, whose harmless foibles and weaknesses, associated as they were with so much truth and purity, rendered her the darling of all who knew her.

Woodward had not proceeded far on his way when he was overtaken by an equestrian, who came up to him at a smart pace, which, however, he checked on getting beside him.

"A fine morning, sir, after an awful night," observed the stranger.

"It is, sir," replied Woodward, "and a most awful night it assuredly was. Have you heard whether

there has been destruction to life or property to any extent?"

"Not so much to life," replied his companion, "but seriously, I understand, to property. If you had ridden far you must have observed the number of dwelling-houses and out offices that have been unroofed, and some of them altogether blown down."

"I have not ridden far," said Woodward; "I was obliged to take shelter in the house of a country gentleman named Goodwin, who lives over in the trees."

"You were fortunate in finding shelter anywhere," replied the stranger, "during such a tempest. I remember nothing like it."

As they proceeded along, indulging in similar chat, they observed that five or six countrymen, who had been walking at a smart pace, about a couple of hundred yards before them, came suddenly to a stand-still, and, after appearing to consult together, they darted off the road and laid themselves down, as if with a view of concealment, behind the grassy ditch which ran along it.

"What can these persons mean?" asked Woodward; "they seem to be concealing themselves."

"Unquestionably they do," replied the stranger; "and yet there appears to be no pursuit after them. I certainly can give no guess as to their object."

While attempting, as they went along, to account for the conduct of the peasants, they were met by a female with a head of hair that was nearly blood-red, and whose features were hideously ugly, or rather we should say, absolutely revolting. Her brows, which were of the same color as the hair, were knit into a

scowl, such as is occasioned by an intense expression of hatred and malignity, yet which was rendered almost frightful by a squint that would have disfigured the features of a demon. Her coarse hair lay matted together in stiff, wiry waves on each side of her head, from whence it streamed down her shoulders, which it covered like a cape of scarlet. As they approached each other, she glanced at them with a look from which they could only infer that she seemed to meditate the murder of each, and yet there was mingled with its malignity a bitter but derisive expression that was perfectly diabolical.

"What a frightful hag!" exclaimed Woodward, addressing his companion; "I never had a perfect conception of the face of an ogress until now! Did you observe her walrus tusks, as they projected over her misshapen nether lip? The hag appears to be an impersonation of all that is evil."

"She may be a very harmless creature for all that," replied the other; "we are not to judge by appearances. I know a man who had murder depicted in his countenance, if ever a man had, and yet there lived not a kinder, more humane, or benevolent creature on earth. He was as simple, too, as a child, and the most affectionate father and husband that ever breathed. These, however, may be exceptions; for most certainly I am of opinion that the countenance may be considered, in general, a very certain index to the character and disposition. But what is this?—here are the men returning from their journey; let us question them."

"Pray," said Woodward, addressing them, "if it be not impertinent, may I inquire why you ran in such a

hurry off the road just now, and hid yourselves behind the ditch?"

"Certainly, sir, you may," replied one of them; "we wor on our way to the fair of Knockmore, and we didn't wish to meet Pugshy Roe" (Red Peggy).

"But why should you not wish to meet her?"

"Bekaise, sir, she's unlucky—unlucky in the three ways—unlucky to man, unlucky to baste, and unlucky to business. She overlooks, sir; she has the Evil Eye—the Lord be about us!"

"The Evil Eye," repeated Woodward, dryly; "and pray what harm could her evil eye do you?"

"Why, nothing in the world," replied the man, näively, "barrin' to wither us off o' the earth—that's all."

"Has she been long in this neighborhood?" asked the stranger.

"Too long, your honor. Sure she overlooked Biddy Nelligan's child, and it never did good aftherwards."

"And I," said another, "am indebted to the thief o' hell for the loss of as good a cow as ever filled a piggin."

"Well, sure," observed a third, "Father Mullen is goin' to read her out next Sunday from the althar. She has been banished from every parish in the counthry. Indeed, I believe he's goin' to drown the candles against her, so that, plaise the Lord, she'll have to tramp.

"How does she live and maintain herself?" asked the stranger again.

"Why, sir," replied the man, "she tuck possession of a waste cabin and a bit o' garden belongin' to it;

and Larry Sullivan, that owns it, was goin' to put her out, when, Lord save us, he and his whole family were saized with sickness, and then he sent word to her that if she'd take it off o' them and put it on some one else he'd let her stay."

"And did she do so?"

"She did, sir; every one o' them recovered, and she put it on his neighbor, poor Harry Commiskey and his family, that used to visit them every day, and from them it went over the country—and bad luck to her! Devil a man of us would have had luck or grace in the fair to-day if we had met her. That's another gift she has—to bring bad luck to any one that meets her first in the mornin'; for if they're goin' upon any business it's sure not to thrive with them. She's worse than Mrs. Lindsay; for Mrs. Lindsay, although she's unlucky to meet, and unlucky to cattle, too, has no power over any one's life; but they say it has always been in *her* family, too."

The equestrians then proceeded at a rather brisk pace until they had got clear of the peasants, when they pulled up a little.

"That is a strange superstition, sir," said Woodward, musingly.

"It is a very common one in this country, at all events," replied the other; "and I believe pretty general in others as well as here."

"Do you place any faith in it?" asked the other.

The stranger paused, as if investigating the subject in question, after which he replied,

"To a certain extent I do; but it is upon this principle, that I believe the force of imagination on a weak

mind constitutes the malady. What is your own opinion?"

"Why, that it is not a superstition but a fact; a fact, too, which has been frequently proved; and, what is more, it is known, as the man said, to be hereditary in families."

"I don't give credence to that," said the stranger.

"Why not, sir?" replied Woodward; "are not the moral qualities hereditary? are not the tempers and dispositions hereditary, as well as decline, insanity, scrofula, and other physical complaints?"

The stranger paused again, and said, "Perhaps so. There is certainly much mystery in human nature; more, probably, than we can conceive or be aware of. Time, however, and the progress of science, will develop much. But who was this Mrs. Lindsay that the man spoke of?"

"That lady, sir," replied the other, "is my mother."

The stranger, from a feeling of delicacy, made no observation upon this, but proceeded to take another view of the same subject.

"Suppose, then," he added, "that we admit the fact that the eye of a certain individual can transfuse, by the force of strong volition, an *evil* influence into the being or bodily system of another—why should it happen that an eye or touch charged with *beneficence*, instead of evil, should fail to affect with a sanative contagion those who labor under many diseases?"

"The only reply I can make to your question," said Woodward, "is this: the one has been long and gen erally known to exist, whereas the *latter* has never been

heard of, which most assuredly would not have been the case if it had *ever* existed; as for the cure of the King's Evil, it is a royal imposture."

"I believe in the *latter*," observed the other calmly.

"Upon what grounds?" asked his companion.

"Simply because I know a person who possesses the sanative power I speak of."

"And I believe in the former," replied Woodward, "and upon better grounds still, because I possess it myself."

"You will pardon me," said the other; "but I hesitate to believe that."

Woodward, who felt this imputation against his veracity with resentment, suddenly pulled up his horse, and, turning himself on the saddle, looked upon his companion with an expression that was as extraordinary as it was blighting. The stranger, on the other hand, reining in *his* horse, and taking exactly the same attitude as Woodward, bent his eye on him in return; and there they sat opposite to each other, where we will leave them until we describe the somewhat extraordinary man who had become the fellow-traveller of the hero of the breakfast table.

He was mounted upon a powerful charger; for indeed it was evident at a glance that no other would have been equal to his weight. He was well-dressed —that is to say, in the garb of a country gentleman of the day. He wore his own hair, however, which fell in long masses over his shoulders, and a falling collar, which came down over his breast. His person was robust and healthy looking, and, what is not very usual in large men, it was remarkable for the most consum-

mate proportion and symmetry. He wore boots and silver spurs, and his feet were unusually small, considering his size, as were also his hands. That, however, which struck the beholder with amazement, was the manly beauty of his features. At a first glance this was visible; but on contemplating them more closely you began to feel something strange and wonderful associated with a feeling of veneration and pleasure. Even this, however, was comparatively little to what a still more deliberate perusal of that face brought to light. There could be read the extraordinary union of humility and grandeur; but above all, and beyond all other expressions, there proceeded from his eyes, and radiated like a halo from every part of his countenance, a sense of power which was felt to be irresistible. His eyes, indeed, were almost transparent with light—a light so clear, benignant, and strong, that it was impossible to withstand their glance, radiant with benevolence though it was. The surrender to that glance, however, was a willing and a pleasing one. The spectator submitted to it as an individual would to the eye of a blessed spirit that was known to communicate nothing but good. There, then, they sat contemplating one another, each, as it were, in the exercise of some particular power, which, in this case, appeared to depend altogether on the expressions of the eye. The gaze was long and combative in its character, and constituted a trial of that moral strength which each, in the peculiar constitution of his being, seemed to possess. After some time, however, Woodward's glance seemed to lose its concentrative power, and gradually to become vague and blank. In a little time he felt himself rapidly

losing ground, and could hardly avoid thinking that the eyes of his opponent were looking into his very soul: his eyelids quivered, his eyes assumed a dull and listless appearance, and ultimately closed for some moments—he was vanquished, and he felt it.

"What is the matter with you?" said his companion at length, "and why did you look at me with such a singular gaze? I hope you do not feel resentment at what I said. I hesitated to believe you only because I thought you might be mistaken."

"I entertain no resentment against you," replied Woodward; "but I must confess I feel astonished. Pray, allow me to ask, sir, are you a medical man?"

"Not at all," replied the other; "I never received a medical education, and yet I perform a great number of cures."

"Then, sir," said Woodward, "I take it, with every respect, that you must be a quack."

"Did you ever know a quack to work a cure without medicine?" replied the other; "now *I* cure *without* medicine, and that is more than the quack is able to do *with* it; I, consequently, cannot be a quack."

"Then, in the devil's name, what are you?" asked Woodward, who felt that his extraordinary fellow-traveller was amusing himself at his expense.

"I reply to no interrogatory urged upon such authority," said the stranger; "but let me advise you, young man, not to allow that mysterious and malignant power which you seem to possess to gratify itself by injury to your fellow-creatures. Let it be the principal purpose of your life to serve them by every means within your reach, otherwise you will neglect to your

cost those great duties for which God created you. Farewell, my friend, and remember my words; for they are uttered in a spirit of kindness and good feeling."

They had now arrived at cross-roads; the stranger turned to the right, and Woodward proceeded, as directed, toward Rathfillan House, the residence of his father.

The building was a tolerably large and comfortable one, without any pretence to architectural beauty. It had a plain porch before the hall-door, with a neat lawn, through which wound a pretty drive up to the house. On each side of the lawn was a semicircle of fine old trees, that gave an ancient and impressive appearance to the whole place.

Now, one might imagine that Woodward would have felt his heart bound with affection and delight on his return to all that ought to have been dear to him after so long an absence. So far from that, however, he returned in disappointment and ill-temper, for he calculated that unless there had been some indefensible neglect, or unjustifiable offence offered to his uncle Hamilton by his family, that gentleman, who, he knew had the character of being both affectionate and good-natured, would never have left his property to a stranger. The alienation of this property from himself was, indeed, the bitter reflection which rankled in his heart, and established in it a hatred against the Goodwins which he resolved by some means to wreak upon them in a spirit of the blackest vengeance. Independently of this, we feel it necessary to say here, that he was utterly devoid of domestic affection, and altogether insensible to the natural claims and feelings of con

sanguinity. His uncle abroad, for instance, had frequently urged him to pay a visit to his relatives, and, of course, to supply him liberally with the necessary funds for the journey. To every such suggestion, however, he gave a decided negative. "If they wish to see me," he would reply, "let them come and see me: as for me, I have no wish to see them, and I shall not go."

This unnatural indifference to the claims of blood and affection not only startled his uncle, but shook his confidence in the honor and integrity of his favorite. Some further discoveries of his dishonesty ultimately led to his expulsion from the heart of that kind relative, as well as from the hospitable roof of which he proved himself so unworthy.

With such a natural disposition, and affected as he must have been by a train of circumstances so decidedly adverse to his hopes and prospects, our readers need not feel surprised that he should return home in anything but an agreeable mood of mind.

CHAPTER IV.

WOODWARD MEETS A GUIDE.—HIS RECEPTION AT HOME.—PREPARATIONS FOR A FETE.

WOODWARD rode slowly, as he indulged in those disagreeable reflections to which we have alluded, until he reached a second cross-roads, where he found himself somewhat at a loss whether to turn or ride straight onward. While pausing for a moment, as to which

way he should take, the mellow whistle of some person behind him, indulging in a light-hearted Irish air, caused him to look back, when he saw a well-made, compact, good-looking young fellow approaching, who, finding his attention evidently directed to him, concluded his melody and respectfully touched his hat.

"Pray, my good friend," said Woodward, "can you direct me to Rathfillan, the residence of Mr. Lindsay, the magistrate?"

"Misther Lindsay's, is it?"

"Yes; I said so."

"Well, I think I can, sir."

"Yes; but are you sure of it?"

"Well, I think I am, sir."

"You think! why, d—n it, sir, do you not know whether you are or not?"

"May I ax, sir," inquired the other in his turn, "if you are a religious character?"

"Why, what the devil has that to do with the matter in question?" said Woodward, beginning to lose his temper. "I ask you to direct me to the residence of a certain gentleman, and you ask me whether I am a religious character? What do you mean by that?"

"Why, sir," replied the man, "not much, I'm afeard—only if you had let me speak, which you didn't, God pardon you, I was going to say, that if you knew the way to heaven as well as I do to Misther Lindsay's you might call yourself a happy man, and born to luck."

Woodward looked with something of curiosity at his new companion, and was a good deal struck with his appearance. His age might be about twenty-eight or

from that to thirty; his figure stout and well-made; his features were decidedly Milesian, but then they were Milesian of the best character; his mouth was firm, but his lips full, red, and handsome; his clear, merry eyes would puzzle one to determine whether they were gray or blue, so equally were the two colors blended in them. After a very brief conversation with him, no one could doubt that humor formed a predominant trait in his disposition. In fact, the spirit of the forthcoming jest was visible in his countenance before the jest itself came forth; but although his whole features bore a careless and buoyant expression, yet there was no mistaking in them the unquestionable evidences of great shrewdness and good sense. He also indulged occasionally in an ironical and comic sarcasm, which, however, was never directed against his friends; this he reserved for certain individuals whose character entitled them to it at his hands. He also drew the long-bow, when he wished, with great skill and effect. Woodward, after having scrutinized his countenance for some time, was about to make some inquiries, as a stranger, concerning the character of his family and the reputation they bore in the neighborhood, when he found himself, considerably to his surprise, placed in the witness-box for a rather brisk fire of cross-examination.

"You are no stranger in this part of the country, I presume," said he, with a view of bringing him out for his own covert and somewhat ungenerous purposes.

"I am no stranger, sure enough, sir," replied the other, "so far as a good slice of the *counthry* side goes; but if I am not you are, sir, or I'm out in it."

"Yes, I am a stranger here."

"Never mind, sir, don't let that disthress you; it's a good man's case, sir. Did you thravel far, wid submission? I spake in kindness, sir."

"Why, yes, a—a—pretty good distance; but about Mr. Lindsay and—"

"Yes, sir; crossed *over*, sir, I suppose? I mane from the *other side?*"

"O! you want to know if I crossed the Channel?"

"Had you a pleasant passage, sir?"

"Yes, tolerable."

"Thank God! I hope you'll make a long stay with us, sir, in this part of the *counthry*. If you have any business to do with Mr. Lindsay—as of coorse you have—why, I don't think you and he will quarrel; and by the way, sir, I know him and the family well, and if I only got a glimpse, I could throw in a word or two to guide you in dalin' wid him—that is, if I knew the business."

"As to that," replied Woodward, "it is not very particular; I am only coming on a pretty long visit to him, and as you say you know the family, I would feel glad to hear what you think of them."

"Misther Lindsay, or rather Misther Charles, and you will have a fine time of it, sir. There's delightful fishin' here, and the best of shootin' and huntin' in harvest and winter—that is, *if you stop so long.*"

"What kind of a man is Mr. Lindsay?"

"A fine, clever * man, sir; six feet in his stockin' soles, and made in proportion."

* Portly, large, comely.

"But I want to know nothing about his figure; is the man reputed good or bad?"

"Why, just good or bad, sir, according as he's treated."

"Is he well liked, then? I trust you understand me now."

"By his friends, sir, no man betther—by them that's his inemies, not so well."

"You mentioned a son of his, Charles, I think; what kind of a young fellow is he?"

"Very like his father, sir."

"I see; well, I thank you, my friend, for the liberality of your information. Has he any daughters?"

"Two, sir; but very unlike their *mother*."

"Why, what kind of a woman *is* their mother?"

"She's a saint, sir, of a sartin class—ever and always at her prayers," (*sotto voce*, "such as they are—cursing her fellow-cratures from mornin' till night.")

"Well, at all events, it is a good thing to be religious."

"Devil a better, sir; but she, as I said, is a saint *from*—heaven" (*sotto voce*, "and very *far* from it too.) But, sir, there's a lady in this neighborhood—I won't name her—that has a tongue as sharp and poisonous as if she lived on rattlesnakes; and she has an eye of her own that they say is every bit as dangerous."

"And who is she, my good fellow?"

"Why, a very intimate friend of Mrs. Lindsay's, and seldom out of her company. Now, sir, do you see that house wid the tall chimleys, or rather do you see the tall chimleys—for you can't see the house itself? That's

where the family we spake of lives, and there you'll see Mrs. Lindsay and the lady I mention."

Woodward, in fact, knew not what to make of his guide; he found him inscrutable, and deemed it useless to attempt the extortion of any further intelligence from him. The latter was ignorant that Mrs. Lindsay's son was expected home, as was every member of that gentleman's family. He had, in fact, given them no information of his return. The dishonest fraud which he had practised upon his uncle, and the apprehension that that good old man had transmitted an account of his delinquency to his relatives, prevented him from writing, lest he might, by subsequent falsehoods, contradict his uncle, and thereby involve himself in deeper disgrace. His uncle, however, was satisfied with having got rid of him, and forbore to render his relations unhappy by any complaint of his conduct. His hope was, that Woodward's expulsion from his house, and the withdrawal of his affections from him, might, upon reflection, cause him to turn over a new leaf—an effort which would have been difficult, perhaps impracticable, had he transmitted to them a full explanation of his perfidy and ingratitude.

A thought now occurred to Woodward with reference to himself. He saw that his guide, after having pointed out his father's house to him, was still keeping him company.

"Perhaps you are coming out of your way," said he; "you have been good enough to show me Mr. Lindsay's residence, and I have no further occasion for your services. I thank you: take this and drink my health;" and as he spoke he offered him some silver.

"Many thanks, sir," replied the man, in a far different tone of voice, "many thanks; but I never resave or take payment for an act of common civility, especially from any gentleman on his way to the family of Mr. Lindsay. And now, sir, I will tell you honestly and openly that there is not a better gentleman alive this day than he is. Himself, his son, and daughter* are loved and honored by all that know them; and woe betide the man that 'ud dare to *cruck* (crook) his finger at one of them."

"You seem to know them very well."

"I have a good right, sir, seein' that I have been in the family ever since I was a gorson."

"And is Mrs. Lindsay as popular as her husband?"

"She is *his* wife, sir—the mother of his children, and my misthress; afther that you may judge for yourself."

"Of course, then, you are aware that they have a son abroad."

"I am, sir, and a fine young man they say he is. Nothing vexes them so much as that he won't come to see them. He's never off their tongue; and if he's aquil to what they say of him, upon my credit the sun needn't take the throuble of shinin' on him."

"Have they any expectation of a visit from him, do you know?"

"Not that I hear, sir; but I know that nothing would rise the cockles of their hearts aquil to seein' him among them. Poor fellow! Mr. Hamilton's will was a bad business for him, as it was thought he'd have danced into the property. But then, they say, his other uncle

* His daughter Jane was with a relation in England, and does not appear in this romance.

will provide for him, especially as he took him from the family, by all accounts, on that condition."

This information—if information it could be called —was nothing more nor less than wormwood and gall to the gentleman on whose ears and into whose heart it fell. The consciousness of his present position—discarded by a kind uncle for dishonesty, and deprived, as he thought, by the caprice or mental imbecility of another uncle, of a property amounting to upwards of twelve hundred per annum—sank upon his heart with a feeling which filled it with a deep and almost blasphemous resentment at every person concerned, which he could scarcely repress from the observation of his guide.

"What is your name?" said he abruptly to him; and as he asked the question he fixed a glance upon him that startled his companion.

The latter looked at him, and felt surprised at the fearful expression of his eye; in the meantime, we must say, that he had not an ounce of coward's flesh on his bones.

"What is my name, sir?" he replied. "Faith, afther that look, if you don't know my name, I do yours; there was your mother's eye fastened on me to the life. However, take it aisy, sir; devil a bit I'm afeard. If you're not her son, Misther Woodward, why, I'm not Barney Casey, that's all. Don't deny it, sir; you're welcome home, and I'm glad to see you, as they all will be."

"Harkee, then," said Woodward, "you are right; but, mark me, keep quiet, and allow me to manage matters in my own way; not a syllable of the discovery

you have made, or it will be worse for you. I am not a person to be trifled with."

"Troth, and you're right there, sir; it's what I often said, often say, and often will say of myself. Barney Casey is not the boy to be trifled wid."

On arriving at the house, Barney took round the horse—a hired one, by the way—to the stable, and Woodward knocked. On the door being opened, he inquired if Mr. Lindsay was within, and was answered in the affirmative.

"Will you let him know a gentleman wishes to see him for a few minutes?"

"What name, sir, shall I say?"

"O, it doesn't matter—say a gentleman."

"Step into the parlor, sir, and he will be with you immediately."

He did so, and was there but a very short time when his step-father entered. Short as the time was, however, he could not prevent himself from reverting to the strange equestrian he had met on his way, nor to the extraordinary ascendency he had gained over him. Another young man placed in his circumstances would have felt agitated and excited by his approaching interview with those who were so nearly related to him, and whom, besides, he had not seen for such a long period of time. To every such emotion, however, he was absolutely insensible; there was no beating pulse, no heaving of the bosom, not a nerve disturbed by the tremulous vibrations of awakened affection, no tumult of the heart, no starting tear—no! there was nothing of all this—but, on the contrary, a calm, cold, imperturbable spirit, so dead and ignorant of domestic attach-

ment, that the man could neither feel nor understand what it meant.

When his step-father entered, he naturally bowed to the stranger, and motioned him to a seat, which the other accordingly took. Lindsay certainly was, as Barney Casey had said, a very fine-looking man for his years. He was tall, erect, and portly, somewhat inclined to corpulency, of a handsome, but florid countenance, in which might be read a large expression of cheerfulness and good-humor, together with that peculiar tinge which results from conviviality. Indeed, there could scarcely be witnessed a more striking contrast than that between his open, kind-looking features, and the sharp, disagreeable symmetry which marked those of his step-son with such a dark and unpleasant character.

"My servant tells me," said Lindsay, courteously, "that you wished to see me."

"I did, sir," replied Woodward; "in that he spoke correctly; I wished to see you, and I am glad to see you."

"I thank you, sir," replied the other, bowing again; "but—ahem—in the meantime, sir, you have the advantage of me."

"And intend to keep it, sir, for a little," replied Woodward, with one of his cold smiles. "I came to speak to you, sir, concerning your son who is abroad, and to ask if you have recently heard from himself or his uncle."

"O, then, I presume, sir," replied Lindsay, "you are an acquaintance or friend of his; if so, allow me to bid you welcome; nothing, I assure you, could afford

either myself or my family greater pleasure than to meet and show attention to any friend of his. Unfortunately, we have heard nothing from him or his uncle for nearly the last year and a half; but, you will be doubly welcome, sir, if you can assure us that they are both well. His uncle, or rather I should say his grand-uncle, for in that relation he stands to him, adopted him, and a kinder man does not live."

"I believe Mr. Woodward and his uncle are both well, the former, I think, sir, is your step-son only."

"Don't say *only*, sir, he is just as much the son of my affection as his brother, and now, sir, may I request to know the name of the gentleman I am addressing?"

"Should you wish to see Henry Woodward himself, sir?"

"Dear sir, nothing would delight me more, and all of us, especially his mother; yet the ungrateful boy would never come near us, although he was pressed and urged to do so a hundred times."

"Well, then, sir," replied that gentleman, rising up, "he now stands before you; I am Henry Woodward, father."

A hug that half strangled him was the first acknowledgment of his identity. "Zounds, my dear Harry—Harry, my dear boy, you're welcome a thousand times, ten thousand times. Stand off a little till I look at you; fine young fellow, and your mother's image. Gadzooks, I was stupid as a block not to know you; but who would have dreamed of it. There, I say—hallo, Jenny!—come here, all of you; here is Harry at last. Are you all deaf, or asleep?"

These words he shouted out at the top of his voice,

and in a few minutes his mother, Charles, and his sister Maria entered the room, the two latter in a state of transport.

"Here, Jenny, here he is; you have the first claim; confound it, Charley, Maria, don't strangle the boy; ha, ha, ha!"

In fact, the precaution, so far as the affectionate brother and sister were concerned, was anything but needless. His mother, seeing their eagerness to embrace him, which they did with tears of delight, stood calmly by until he was disentangled from their arms, when she approached him and imprinted two kisses up on his lips, with an indifference of manner that, to a stranger, would have been extraordinary, but which, to those who were present, excited no surprise; for she had scarcely, during her life, ever kissed one of her own children. Nothing, indeed, could exceed the tumultuous exultation of spirits with which they received him, nor was honest Lindsay himself less joyously affected. Yet it might be observed that there was a sparkle in the eye of his mother, which was as singular as it was concentrated and intense. Such an expression might be observed in a menagerie when a tigress, indolently dallying with one of her cubs, exhibits, even in repose, those fiery scintillations in the eye which startle the beholders. The light of that eye, though intense, was cold, calculating, and disagreeable to look upon. The frigidity of her manner and reception of him might, to a certain extent, be accounted for from the fact that she had gone to his uncle's several times for the purpose of seeing him, and watching his interests. Let us not, therefore, impute to the coldness of her habits any want

of affection for him; on the contrary, his little finger was a thousand times dearer to her than the bodies and souls of all her other children, adding to them her husband himself, put together. Besides, she was perfectly unsusceptible of emotions of tenderness, and, consequently, a woman of powerful will, inflexible determination, and the most inexorable resentments. She was also ambitious, as far as she had scope for it, within her sphere of life, and would have been painfully penurious in her family, were it not that the fiery resolution of her husband, when excited by long and intolerable provocation, was at all times able to subdue her—a superiority over her will and authority which she never forgave him. In fact, she neither loved herself, nor anything in common with him; and the natural affection which he displayed on the return of her son was one reason why *she* received him with such apparent indifference. To all the rest of the family she had a heart of stone. Since her second marriage they had lost three children; but, so far as she was concerned, each of them went down into a tearless grave. She had once been handsome; but her beauty, like her son's, was severe and disagreeable. There is, however, such a class of beauty, and it is principally successful with men who have a *penchant* for overcoming difficulties, because it is well known that the fact of conciliating or subduing it is justly considered no ordinary achievement. A great number of our old maids may trace their solitude and their celibacy to the very questionable gift of such beauty, and the dispositions which usually accompany it. She was tall, and had now grown thin, and her features had become sharpened by ill-

temper into those of a fleshless, angular-faced vixen Altogether she was a faithful exponent of her own evil and intolerable disposition; and it was said that she had inherited that and the "unlucky eye" from a family that was said to have been deservedly unpopular, and equally unscrupulous in their resentments.

"Well, Harry," said she, after the warm-hearted ebullition of feeling produced by his appearance had subsided, "so you have returned to us at last; but indeed you return now to a blank and dismal prospect. Miss Goodwin's adder tongue has charmed the dotage of your silly old uncle to some purpose for herself."

"Confound it, Jenny," said her husband, "let the young man breathe, at least, before you bring up that eternal subject. Is not the matter over and decided? and where is the use of your making both yourself and us unhappy by discussing it?"

"It may be decided, but it is not over, Lindsay," she replied; "don't imagine it: I shall pursue the Goodwins, especially that sorceress, Alice, with a vengeance that will annul the will, and circumvent those who wheedled him into the making of it. My curse upon them all, as it will be!"

"Harry, when you become better acquainted with your mother," said his step-father, "you will get sick of this. Have you breakfasted; for that is more to the point?"

"I have, sir," replied the other; "and you would scarcely guess where;" and here he smiled and glanced significantly at his mother.

"Why, I suppose," said Lindsay, "in whatever inn you stopped at."

'No," he replied; "I was obliged to seek shelter from the storm last night, and where do you think I found it?"

"Heaven knows. Where?"

"Why, with your friend and neighbor, Mr. Goodwin."

"No friend, Harry," said his mother; "don't say that."

"I slept there last night," he proceeded, "and breakfasted there this morning, and nothing could exceed the cordiality and kindness of my reception."

"Did they know who you were?" asked his mother, with evident interest.

"Not till this morning, at breakfast."

"Well," said she again, "when they heard it?"

"Why, their attention and kindness even redoubled," replied her son; "and as for Miss Goodwin herself, she's as elegant, as sweet, and as lovely a girl as I ever looked on. Mother, I beg you to entertain no implacable or inveterate enmity against her. I will stake my existence that she never stooped to any fraudulent circumvention of my poor uncle. Take my word for it, the intent and execution of the will must be accounted for otherwise."

"Well and truly said, Harry," said his step-father—"well and generously said; give me your hand, my boy; thank you. Now, madam," he proceeded, addressing his wife, "what have you to say to the opinion of a man who has lost so much by the transaction, when you hear that that opinion is given in her favor?"

"Indeed, my dear Harry," observed his sister, "she

is all that you have said of her, and much more, if you knew her as we do; she is all disinterestedness and truth, and the most unselfish girl that ever breathed."

Now, there were two persons present who paused upon hearing this intelligence; one of whom listened to it with unexpected pleasure, and the other with mingled emotions of pleasure and pain. The first of these was Mrs. Lindsay, and the other her son Charles. Mrs. Lindsay, whose eyes were not for a moment off her son, understood the significant glance he had given her when he launched forth so heartily in the praise of Alice Goodwin; neither did the same glance escape the observation of his brother Charles, who inferred, naturally enough, from the warmth of the eulogium that had been passed upon her, that she had made, perhaps, too favorable an impression upon his brother. Of this, however, the reader shall hear more in due time.

"Well," said the mother slowly, and in a meditating voice, "perhaps, after all, we may have done her injustice. If so, no person would regret it more than myself; but we shall see. You parted from them, Harry, on friendly terms?"

"I did, indeed, my dear mother, and am permitted, almost solicited, to make their further acquaintance, and cultivate a friendly intimacy with them, which I am determined to do."

"Bravo, Harry, my fine fellow; and we will be on friendly terms with them once more. Poor, honest, and honorable old Goodwin! what a pity that either disunion or enmity should subsist between us. No; the families must be once more cordial and affectionate, as they ought to be. Bravo, Harry! your return is pro-

phetic of peace and good feeling; and, confound me, but you shall have a bonfire this night for your generosity that will shame the sun. The tar-barrels shall blaze, and the beer-barrels shall run to celebrate your appearance amongst us. Come, Charley, let us go to Rathfillan, and get the townsfolk to prepare for the *fête:* we must have fiddlers and pipers, and plenty of dancing. Barney Casey must go among the tenants, too, and order them all into the town. Mat Mulcahy, the innkeeper, must give us his best room; and, my life to yours, we will have a pleasant night of it."

"George," exclaimed his wife, in a tone of querulous remonstrance, you know how expensive—"

"Confound the expense and your penury both," exclaimed her husband; "is it to your own son, on his return to us after such an absence, that you'd grudge the expense of a blazing bonfire?"

"Not the bonfire," replied his wife, "but—"

"Ay, but the cost of drink to the tenants. Why, upon my soul, Harry, your mother is anything but popular here, you must know; and I think if it were not from respect to me and the rest of the family she'd be indicted for a witch. Gadzooks, Jenny, will I never get sense or liberality into your head? Ay, and if you go on after your usual fashion, it is not unlikely that you may have a tar-barrel of your own before long. Go, you and Harry, and tell your secrets to each other while we prepare for the jubilation. In the meantime, we must get up an extempore dinner to-day—the *set* dinner will come in due time, and be a different affair; but at all events some of the neighbors we must have to join us in the jovialities—hurroo!"

"Well, George," said she, with her own peculiar smile, "I see you are in one of your moods to-day."

"Ay, right enough, the *imperative* one, my dear."

"And, so far as I am concerned, it would not certainly become me to stand in the way of any honor bestowed upon my son Harry; so I perceive you must only have it your own way—*I consent.*"

"I don't care a fig whether you do or not. When matters come to a push, I am always master of my own house, and ever will be so—and you know it. Good-by, Harry, we will be back in time for dinner, with as many friends as we can pick up on so short notice—hurroo!"

He and Charles accordingly went forth to make the necessary preparations, and give due notice of the bonfire, after which they succeeded in securing the attendance of about a dozen guests to partake of the festivity.

Barney, in the meantime, having received his orders for collecting, or, as it was then called, *warning in* the tenantry to the forthcoming bonfire, proceeded upon his message in high spirits, not on account of the honor it was designed to confer on Woodward, against whom he had already conceived a strong antipathy, in consequence of the resemblance he bore to his mother, but for the sake of the fun and amusement which he purposed to enjoy at it himself. The first house he went into was a small country cabin, such as a petty farmer of five or six acres at that time occupied. The door was not of wood, but of wicker-work woven across long wattles and plastered over with clay mortar. The house had two small holes in the

front side-walls to admit the light; but during severe weather these were filled up with straw or rags to keep out the storm. On one side of the door stood a large *curra*, or, "ould man," for it was occasionally termed both—composed of brambles and wattles tied up lengthwise together—about the height of a man and as thick as an ordinary sack. This was used, as they termed it, "to keep the wind from the door." If the blast came from the right, it was placed on that side, and if from the left, it was changed to the opposite. Chimneys, at that period, were to be found only upon the houses of extensive and wealthy farmers, the only substitute for them being a simple hole in the roof over the fireplace. The small farmer in question cultivated his acres with a spade; and after sowing his grain he harrowed it in with a large thorn bush, which he himself, or one of his sons, dragged over it with a heavy stone on the top to keep it close to the surface. When Barney entered this cabin he found the *vanithee*, or woman of the house, engaged in the act of grinding oats into meal for their dinner with a quern, consisting of two diminutive millstones turned by the hand; this was placed upon a *praskeen*, or coarse apron, spread under it on the floor to receive the meal. An old woman, her mother, sat spinning flax with the distaff—for as yet flax wheels were scarcely known—and a lubberly young fellow about sixteen, with able, well-shaped limbs and great promise of bodily strength, sat before the fire managing a double task, to wit, roasting, first, a lot of potatoes in the *greeshaugh*, which consisted of half embers and half ashes, glowing hot; and, secondly, at a little distance from the larger lighted

turf, two duck eggs, which, as well as the potatoes, he turned from time to time, that they might be equally done. All this he conducted by the aid of what was termed a *muddha vristha*, or rustic tongs, which was nothing more than a wattle, or stick, broken in the middle, between the ends of which he held both his potatoes and his eggs while turning them. Two good-looking, fresh-colored girls were squatted on their *hunkers* (hams), cutting potatoes for seed—late as the season was—with two case knives, which had been borrowed from a neighboring farmer of some wealth. The dress of the women was similar and simple. It consisted of a long-bodied gown that had only half skirts; that is to say, instead of encompassing the whole person, the lower part of it came forward only as far as the hip bones, on each side, leaving the front of the petticoat exposed. This posterior part of the gown would, if left to fall to its full length, have formed a train behind them of at least two feet in length. It was pinned up, however, to a convenient length, and was not at all an ungraceful garment, if we except the sleeves, which went no farther than the elbows—a fashion in dress which is always unbecoming, especially when the arms are thin. The hair of the elder woman was doubled back in front, from about the middle of the forehead, and the rest of the head was covered by a *dowd cap*, the most primitive of all female head-dresses, being a plain shell, or skull-cap, as it were, for the head, pointed behind, and without any fringe or border whatsoever. This turning up of the hair was peculiar only to married life, of which condition it was universally a badge. The young females wore theirs fastened behind by a skewer; but

on this occasion one of them, the youngest, allowed it to fall in natural ringlets about her cheeks and shoulders.

"God save all here," said Barney, as he entered the house.

"God save you kindly, Barney," was the instant reply from all.

"Ah, Mrs. Davoren," he proceeded, "ever the same; by this and by that, if there's a woman living ignorant of one thing, and you are that woman."

"Sorrow off you, Barney! well, what is it?"

"Idleness, achora. Now, let me see if you have e'er a finger at all to show; for upon my honorable word they ought to be worn to the stumps long ago. Well, and how are you all? But sure I needn't ax. Faith, you're crushin' the *blanther** anyhow, and that looks well."

"We must live, Barney; 'tis a poor shift we'd make 'idout the praties and the *broghan*," (meal porridge).

"What news from the big house?"

"News, is it? Come, Corney, come, girls, bounce; news is it? O, faitha', thin it's I that has the news that will make you all shake your feet to-night."

"Blessed saints, Barney, what is it?"

"Bounce, I say, and off wid ye to gather *brusna* (dried and rotten brambles) for a bonfire in the great town of Rathfillan."

"A bonfire, Barney! Arra, why, man alive?"

"Why? Why, bekaise the masther's step-son and the misthress's own pet has come home to us to set

* *Blanter*, a well-known description of oats. It was so called from having been originally imported from Blantire in Scotland.

the counthry into a state o' conflagration wid his beauty. There won't be a whole cap in the barony before this day week. They're to have fiddlers, and pipers, and dancin', and drinkin' to no end; and the glory of it is that the masther, God bless him, is to pay for all. Now!"

The younger of the two girls sprang to her feet with the elasticity and agility of a deer.

"O, *beetha*, Barney," she exclaimed, "but that will be the fun! And the misthress's son is home? Arra, what is he like, Barney? Is he as handsome as Masther Charles?"

"I hope he's as good," said her mother.

"As good, Bridget? No, but worth a ship-load of him; he has a pair of eyes in his head, Granua," (*anglice*, Grace,) addressing the younger, "that 'ud turn *Glendhis* (the dark glen) to noonday at midnight; divil a lie in it; and his hand's never out of his pocket wid generosity."

"O, mother," said Grace, "won't we all go?"

"Don't ax your mother anything about it," replied Barney, "bekaise mother, and father, and sisther, and brother, daughter and son, is all to come."

"Arra, Barney," said Bridget Davoren, for such was her name, "is this gentleman like his *ecald* of a mother?"

"Hasn't a feature of her purty face," he replied, "and, to the back o' that, is very much given to religion. Troth, my own opinion is, he'll be one of ourselves yet; for I can tell you a saicret about him."

"A saicret, Barney," said Grace; "maybe he's married?"

"Married, no; he tould me himself this mornin' that it's not his intention ever to marry 'till he meets a purty girl to plaise him; he'll keep a loose foot, he says, and an aisy conscience till then, he says; but the saicret is this, he never aits flesh mate of a Friday—when he *can't* get it. Indeed, I'm afeard he's too good to be long for this world; but still, if the Lord was to take him, wouldn't it be a proof that he had a great regard for him!"

Grace Davoren was flushed and excited with delight. She was about eighteen, rather tall for her age, but roundly and exquisitely moulded; her glossy ringlets, as they danced about her cheeks and shoulders, were black as ebony; but she was no *brunette;* for her skin was milk white, and that portion of her bosom, which was uncovered by the simple nature of her dress, threw back a polished light like ivory; her figure was perfection, and her white legs were a finer specimen of symmetry than ever supported the body of the Venus de Medicis. This was all excellent; but it was the sparkling lustre of her eyes, and the radiance of her whole countenance, that attracted the beholder. If there was anything to be found fault with, it was in the spirit, not in the physical perfection, of her beauty. There was, for instance, too much warmth of coloring and of constitution visible in her whole exquisite person; and sometimes her glances would puzzle you to determine whether they were those of innocence or of challenge. Be this as it may, she was a rare specimen of rustic beauty and buoyancy of spirit.

"O, Barney," said she, "that's the pleasantest news I heard this month o' Sundays—sich dancin' as we'll

have! and maybe I won't foot it, and me got my new shoes and drugget gown last week;" and here she lilted a gay Irish air, to which she set a-dancing with a lightness of foot and vivacity of manner that threw her whole countenance into a most exquisite glow of mirthful beauty.

"Granua," said her mother, reprovingly, "think of yourself and what you are about; if you worn't a light-hearted, and, I'm afeard, a light-headed, girl, too, you wouldn't go on as you do, especially when you know what you know, and what Barney here, too, knows."

"Ah," said Barney, his whole manner immediately changing, "have you heard from *him*, poor fellow?"

"Torley's gone to the mountains," she replied, "and —but here he is. Well, Torley, what news, asthore?"

Her husband having passed a friendly greeting to Barney, sat down, and having taken off his hat, lifted the skirt of his cothamore (big coat) and wiped the perspiration off his large and manly forehead, on which, however, were the traces of deep care. He did not speak for some time, but at length said:

"Bridget, give me a drink."

His wife took a wooden noggin, which she dipped into a churn and handed him. Having finished it at a draught, he wiped his mouth with his gathered palm, breathed deeply, but was still silent.

"Torley, did you hear me? What news of that unfortunate boy?"

"No news, Bridget, at least no good news; the boy's an outlaw, and will be an outlaw—or rather he won't be an outlaw long; they'll get him soon."

"But why would they get him? hasn't he sense enough to keep from them?"

"That's just what he has not, Bridget; he has left the mountains and come down somewhere to the Infield country; but where, I cannot make out."

"Well, asthore, he'll only bring on his own punishment. Troth, I'm not a bit sorry that Granua missed him. I never was to say, *for* the match, but *you* should have your way, and force the girl there to it, over and above. Of what use is his land and wealth to him now?"

"God's will be done," replied her husband, sorrowfully. "As for me, I can do no more in it, nor I won't. I was doing the best for my child. He'll be guided by no one's advice but his own."

"That's true," replied his wife, "you did. But here's Barney Casey, from the big house, comin' to warn the tenantry to a bonfire that's to be made tonight in Rathfillan, out of rejoicin' for the misthress's son that's come home to them."

Here Barney once more repeated the message, with which the reader is already acquainted.

"You are all to come," he proceeded, "ould and young; and to bring every one a backload of sticks and *brusna* to help to make the bonfire."

"Is this message from the masther or misthress, Barney!" asked Davoren.

"O, straight from himself," he replied. "I have it from his own lips. Troth he's ready to leap out of his skin wid delight."

"Bekaise," added Davoren, "if it came from the misthress, the sorrow foot either I or any one of my

family would set near her; but from himself, that's a horse of another color. Tell him, Barney, we'll be there, and bring what we can to help the bonfire."

Until this moment the young fellow at the fire never uttered a syllable, nor seemed in the slightest degree conscious that there was any person in the house but himself. He was now engaged in masticating the potatoes and eggs, the latter of which he ate with a thin splinter of bog deal, which served as a substitute for an egg-spoon, and which is to this day used among the poor for the same purpose in the remoter parts of Ireland. At length he spoke:

"This won't be a good night for a bonfire anyhow."

"Why, Andy, *abouchal?*" (my boy.)

"Bekaise, mudher, *the storm was in the fire** last night when I was rakin' it."

"Then we'll have rough weather," said his father; "no doubt of that."

"Don't be afeard," said Barney, laughing; "take my word for it, if there's to be rough weather, and that some witch or wizard has broken bargain with the devil, the misthress has intherest to get it put off till the bonfire's over."

He then bade them good-by, and took his departure to fulfil his agreeable and welcome mission. Indeed,

* This is a singular phenomenon, which, so far as I am aware, has never yet been noticed by any Irish or Scotch writers when describing the habits and usages of the people in either country. When stirring the *greeshaugh*, or red-hot ashes, at night at the settling, or mending, or raking of the fire, a blue, phosphoric-looking light is distinctly visible in the embers, and the more visible in proportion to the feebleness of the light emitted by the fire. It is only during certain states of the atmosphere that this is seen. It is always considered as a prognostic of severe weather, and its appearance is termed as above.

he spent the greater portion of the day not only in going among the tenants in person, but in sending the purport of the said mission to be borne upon the four winds of heaven through every quarter of the barony; after which he proceeded to the little market-town of Rathfillan, where he secured the services of two fiddlers and two pipers. This being accomplished, he returned home to his master's, ripe and ready for both dinner and supper; for, as he had missed the former meal, he deemed it most judicious to kill, as he said, the two birds with one stone, by demolishing them both together.

CHAPTER V.

THE BONFIRE.—THE PRODIGY.

Andy Davoren's prognostic, so far as the appearance of the weather went, seemed, at a first glance, to be literally built on ashes. A calm, mild, and glorious serenity lay upon the earth; the atmosphere was clear and golden; the light of the sun shot in broad, transparent beams across the wooded valleys, and poured its radiance upon the forest tops, which seemed empurpled with its rich and glowing tones. All the usual signs of change or rough weather were wanting. Everything was quiet; and a general stillness was abroad, which, when a sound did occur, caused it to be heard at an unusual distance. Not a breath of air stirred the trees, which stood as motionless as if they had been carved of marble. Notwithstanding all these auspicious appearances, there were visible to a clear observer of

nature some significant symptoms of a change. The surfaces of pools and rivers were covered with large white bubbles, which are always considered as indications of coming rain. The dung heaps, and the pools generally attached to them, emitted a fetid and offensive smell; and the pigs were seen to carry straw into their sties, or such rude covers as had been constructed for them.

In the meantime the dinner party in Lindsay's were enjoying themselves in a spirit quite as genial as his hospitality. It consisted of two or three country squires, a Captain Dowd—seldom sober—a pair of twin brothers, named Cumming, with a couple of half sirs—a class of persons who bore the same relation to a gentleman that a salmon-trout does to a salmon. The Protestant clergyman of the parish was there—a jocund, rattling fellow, who loved his glass, his dog, his gun, and, if fame did not belie him, paid more devotion to his own enjoyments than he did to his Bible. He dressed in the extreme of fashion, and was a regular dandy parson of that day. There also was Father Magauran, the parish priest, a rosy-faced, jovial little man, with a humorous twinkle in his blue eye, and an anterior rotundity of person that betokened a moderate relish for the convivialities. Altogether it was a merry meeting; and of the host himself it might be said that he held as conspicuous a place in the mirth as he did in the hospitality.

"Come, gentlemen," said he, after the ladies had retired to the withdrawing-room, "come, gentlemen, fill high; fill your glasses."

"Troth," said the priest, "we'd put a heap on them, if we could."

"Right, Father Magauran; do put a heap on them, if you can; but, at all events, let them be brimmers; I'm going to propose a toast."

"Let it be a lady, Lindsay, if you love me," said the parson, filling his glass.

"Sorra hair I care if it is," said the priest, "provided she's dacent and attends her duty; go on, squire; give us her name at once, and don't keep the parson's teeth watering."

"Be quiet, reverend gentlemen," said Lindsay, laughing; "how can a man speak when you take the words out of his mouth?"

"The Lord forbid we'd swallow them, though," subjoined the parson; "if we did, we'd not be long in a state of decent sobriety."

"Talk about something you understand, my worthy friends, and allow me to proceed," replied the host; "don't you know that every interruption keeps you from your glass? Gentlemen, I have great pleasure in proposing the health of my excellent and worthy stepson, who has, after a long absence, made me and all my family happy by his return amongst us. I am sure you will all like him when you come to know him, and that the longer you know him, the better you will like him. Come now, let me see the bottom of every man's glass uppermost. I do not address myself directly to the parson or the priest, because that, I know, would be, as the latter must admit, a want of confidence in their kindness.

"Parson," said the priest, in a whisper, "that last observation is gratifying from Lindsay."

"Lindsay is a gentleman," replied the other, in the

same voice; "and the most popular magistrate in the barony. Come, then."

Here the worthy gentleman's health was drank with great enthusiasm, after which he thanked them in very grateful and courteous terms, paying, at the same time, some rather handsome compliments to the two clergymen with respect to the appropriate gravity and exquisite polish of their manners. He saw the rapidity with which they had gulped down the wine, and felt their rudeness in interrupting Mr. Lindsay, when about to propose his health, as offensive, and he retorted it upon them with peculiar irony, that being one of the talents which, among others, he had inherited from his mother.

"I cannot but feel myself happy," said he, "in returning to the roof of so hospitable a father; but sensible to the influences of religion, as I humbly trust I am, I must express a still higher gratification in having the delightful opportunity of making the acquaintance of two reverend gentlemen, whose proper and becoming example will, I am sure, guide my steps—if I have only grace to follow it—into those serious and primitive habits which characterize themselves, and are so decent and exemplary in the ministers of religion. They may talk of the light of the gospel; but, if I don't mistake, the light of the gospel itself might pale its ineffectual fires before that which shines in their apostolic countenances."

The mirth occasioned by this covert, but comical, rebuke, fell rather humorously upon the two worthy gentlemen, who, being certainly good-natured and excellent men, laughed heartily.

"That's a neat speech," said the parson, "but not exactly appropriate. Father Tom and I are quite unworthy of the compliment he has paid us."

"Neat," said Father Tom; "I don't know whether the gentleman has a profession or not; but from the tone and spirit in which he spoke, I think that if he has taken up any other than that of his church, he has missed his vocation. My dear parson, he talks of the light of our countenances—a light that is lit by hospitality on the one hand, and moderate social enjoyment on the other. It is a light, however, that neither of us would exchange for a pale face and an eye that seems to have something mysterious at the back of it."

"Come, come, Harry," said Lindsay, "you mustn't be bantering these two gentlemen; as I said of yourself, the longer you know them the better you will relish them. They have both too much sense to carry religion about with them like a pair of hawkers, crying out 'who'll buy, who'll buy;' neither do they wear long faces, nor make themselves disagreeable by dragging religion into every subject that becomes the topic of conversation. On the contrary, they are cheerful, moderately social, and, to my own knowledge, with all their pleasantry, are active exponents of much practical benevolence to the poor. Come, man, take your wine, and enjoy good company."

"Lindsay," said one of the guests, a magistrate, "how are we to get the country quiet? Those rapparees and outlaws will play the devil with us if we don't put them down. That young scoundrel, *Shawn na Middogue*, is at the head of them it is said, and,

it would seem, possesses the power of making himself invisible; for we cannot possibly come at him, although he has been often seen by others."

"Why, what has been Shawn's last exploit?"

"Nothing that I have heard of since Bingham's robbery; but there is none of us safe. Have you your house and premises secured?"

"Not I," replied Lindsay, "unless by good bolts and bars, together with plenty of arms and ammunition."

"How is it that these fellows are not taken?" asked another.

"Because the people protect them," said a third; "and because they have strength and activity; and thirdly, because we have no adequate force to put them down."

"All very sound reasons," replied the querist; "but as to *Shawn na Middogue*, the people are impressed with a belief that he is under the protection of the fairies, and can't be taken, on this account. Even if they were willing to give him up, which they are not, they dare not make the attempt, lest the vengeance of the fairies might come down on themselves and their cattle, in a thousand shapes."

"I will tell you what the general opinion upon the subject is," replied the other. "It seems his foster-mother was a midwife, and that she was called upon once, about the hour of midnight, to discharge the duties of her profession toward a fairyman's wife, and this she refused to do unless they conferred some gift either upon herself personally, or upon some one whom she should name. Young Shawn, it appears, was her

favorite, and she got a solemn promise from them to take him under their protection, and to preserve him from danger. This is the opinion of the people; but whether it is true or not I won't undertake to determine."

"Come, gentlemen," said their host, "push the bottle; remember we must attend the bonfire."

"So," said the magistrate, "you are sending us to blazes, Mr. Lindsay."

"Well, at all events, my friends," continued Mr. Lindsay, "we must make haste, for there's little time to spare. Take your liquor, for we must soon be off. The evening is delightful. If you are for coffee, let us adjourn to the ladies; and after the bonfire we will return and make a night of it."

"Well said, Lindsay," replied the parson; "and so we will."

"Here, you young stranger," said the priest, addressing Woodward, "I'll drink your health once more in this bumper. You touched us off decently enough, but a little too much on the sharp, as you would admit if you knew us. Your health again, sir, and you are welcome among us!"

"Thank you, sir," replied Woodward; "I am glad to see that you can bear a jest from me or my father, even when it is at your own expense—your health."

"Are you a sportsman?" asked the parson; "because, if you are not, just put yourself under my patronage, and I will teach you something worth knowing. I will let you see what shooting and hunting mean."

"I am a bit of one," replied Woodward, "but shall

be very happy to put myself into your hands, notwithstanding."

"If I don't lengthen your face I shall raise your heart," proceeded the divine. "If I don't make a sportsman of you—"

"Ay," added the priest, "you will find yourself in excellent hands, Mr. Woodward."

"If I don't make a sportsman of you—confound your grinning, Father Tom, what are you at?—I'll make a far better thing of you, that is, a good fellow, always, of course, provided that you have the materials in you."

"Not a doubt of it," added Father Tom; "you'll polish the same youth until he shines like yourself or his worthy father here. He'll give you a complexion, my boy—a commodity that you sadly want at present."

The evening was now too far advanced to think of having coffee—a beverage, by the way, to which scarcely a single soul of them was addicted. They accordingly got to their legs, and as darkness was setting in they set out for the village to witness the rejoicings. Young Woodward, however, followed his brother to the drawing-room, whither he had betaken himself at an early hour after dinner. Under their escort, their mother and sister accompanied them to the bonfire. The whole town was literally alive with animation and delight. The news of the intended bonfire had gone rapidly abroad, and the country people crowded into the town in hundreds. Nothing can at any time exceed the enthusiasm with which the Irish enter into and enjoy scenes like that to which they

now flocked with such exuberant spirits. Bells were ringing, drums were beating, fifes were playing in the town, and horns sounding in every direction, both in town and country. The people were apparelled in their best costume, and many of them in that equivocal description of it which could scarcely be termed costume at all. Bareheaded and barefooted multitudes of both sexes were present, regardless of appearances, half mad with delight, and exhibiting many a frolic and gambol considerably at variance with the etiquette of fashionable life, although we question whether the most fashionable *fête* of them all ever produced half so much happiness. Farmers had come from a distance in the country, mounted upon lank horses ornamented with incrusted hips, and caparisoned with long straw back-suggauns that reached from the shoulder to the tail, under which ran a crupper of the same material, designed, in addition to a hay girth, to keep this primitive riding gear firm upon the animal's back. Behind the farmer, generally sat either a wife or a daughter, remarkable for their scarlet cloaks and blue petticoats; sometimes with shoes and stockings, and very often without them. Among those assembled, we cannot omit to mention a pretty numerous sprinkling of that class of strollers, vagabonds, and impostors with which the country, at the period of our tale, was overrun Fortune-tellers, of both sexes, quacks, card-cutters, herbalists, cow-doctors, whisperers, with a long list of such cheats, were at the time a prevailing nuisance throughout the kingdom; nor was there a fair proportion of them wanting here. That, however, which filled the people with the most especial curiosity,

awe, and interest, was the general report that nothing less than a live conjurer, who had come to town on that very evening, was then among them. The town, in fact, was crowded as if it had been for an illumination; but as illuminations, unless they could be conducted with rushlights, were pageants altogether unknown in such small remote towns as Rathfillan, the notion of one had never entered their heads. All around the country, however, even for many miles, the bonfires were blazing, and shone at immense distances from every hill-top. We have said before that Lindsay was both a popular landlord and a popular magistrate; and on this account alone the disposition to do honor to any member of his family was recognized by the people as an act of gratitude and duty.

The town of Rathfillan presented a scene of which we who live in the present day can form but a faint conception. Yet, sooth to say, we ourselves have, about forty years ago, witnessed in remote glens and mountain fastnesses little clumps of cabins, whose inhabitants stood still in the midst even of the snail's progress which civilization had made in the rustic parts of Ireland; and who, upon examination, presented almost the same rude personal habits, antiquated social usages, agricultural ignorance, and ineradicable superstition as their ancestors did in the reign of Queen Elizabeth. Lindsay, knowing how unpopular his wife was, not only among their own tenantry, but throughout the country at large, and feeling, besides, how well that unpopularity was merited, very properly left her and Maria to his son Charles, knowing that as the two last named shared in the good-will which the people

bore him, their mother would be treated with forbearance and respect so long as she was in their company. He wished, besides, that Harry should seem to partake of the honor and gratitude which their enthusiasm would prompt them to pay to himself.

The whole town was one scene of life, bustle, and enjoyment. It was studded with bonfires, which were surrounded by wild groups of both sexes, some tolerably dressed, some ragged as Lazarus, and other young urchins with nothing but a slip of rag tied about their loins "to make them look jinteel and daicent." The monster bonfire, however—that which was piled up into an immense pyramid in honor of the stranger—was not ignited until the arrival of the quality. The moment the latter made their appearance it was set in a flame, and in a few minutes a blaze issued up from it into the air that not only dimmed the minor exhibitions, but cast its huge glare over the whole town, making every house and hut as distinctly visible as if it were broad daylight. Then commenced the huzzaing—the bells rang out with double energy—the drums were beaten more furiously—the large bullocks' horns were sounded until those who blew them were black in the face, and every manifestation of joy that could be made was resorted to. Fiddles and pipes were in busy requisition, and "the Boys of Rathfillan," the favorite local air, resounded in every direction. And now that the master and the quality had made their appearance, of course the drink should soon follow, and in a short time the hints to that effect began to thicken.

"Thunder and turf, Jemmy, but this is dry work;

my throat's like a lime-burner's wig for want of a drop o' something to help me for the cheerin'."

"Hould your tongue, Paddy; do you think the masther's honor would allow us to lose our voices in his behalf. It's himself that hasn't his heart in a trifle, God bless him."

"Ah, thin, your honor," said another fellow, in tatters, "isn't this dust and hate enough to choke a bishop? O Lord, am I able to spake at all? Upon my sowl, sir, I think there's a bonfire in my throath."

Everything, however, had been prepared to meet these demands; and in about a quarter of an hour barrels of beer and kegs of whiskey were placed under the management of persons appointed to deal out their contents to the thirsty crowds. Then commenced the dancing, whilst the huzzaing, shouting, jingling of bells, squeaking of fifes, blowing of horns, and all the other component parts of this wild melody, were once more resumed with still greater vigor. The great feat of the night, however, so far as the people were concerned, was now to take place. This was to ascertain, by superior activity, who among the young men could leap over the bonfire, when burnt down to what was considered such a state as might make the attempt a safe one. The circles about the different fires were consequently widened to leave room for the run, and then commenced those hazardous but comic performances. As may be supposed, they proceeded with various success, and occasioned the most uproarious mirth whenever any unfortunate devil, who had overtasked his powers in the attempt, happened to fail, and was forced to scamper out of the subsiding flames with

scorched limbs that set him a dancing without music. In fact, those possessed of activity enough to clear them were loudly cheered, and rewarded with a glass of whiskey, a temptation which had induced so many to try, and so many to fail. When these had been concluded about the minor fires, the victors and spectators repaired to the great one, to try their fortune upon a larger and more hazardous scale. It was now nearly half burned down, but was still a large, glowing mass, at least five feet high, and not less than eighteen in diameter at the base. On arriving there they all looked on in silence, appalled by its great size, and altogether deterred from so formidable an attempt.

It would be death to try it, they exclaimed; no living man could do it; an opinion which was universally acceded to, with one single exception. A thin man, rather above the middle size, dressed in a long, black coat, black breeches, and black stockings, constituted that exception. There was something peculiar, and even strikingly mysterious, in his whole appearance. His complexion was pale as that of a corpse, his eyes dead and glassy, and the muscles of his face seemed as if they were paralyzed and could not move. His right hand was thrust in his bosom, and over his left arm he bore some dark garment of a very funereal cast, almost reminding one of a mortcloth.

"There is *one*," said he, in a hollow and sepulchral voice, "that *could* do it."

Father Magauran, who was present, looked at him with surprise; as indeed did every one who had got an opportunity of seeing him.

"I know there is," he replied, "a sartin individual

who could do it; ay, in troth, and maybe if he fell into the flames, too, he'd only find himself in his own element; and if it went to that could dance a hornpipe in the middle of it."

This repartee of the priest's elicited loud laughter from the by-standers, who, on turning round to see how the other bore it, found that he had disappeared. This occasioned considerable amazement, not unmixed with a still more extraordinary feeling. Nobody there knew him, nor had ever even seen him before; and in a short time the impression began to gain ground that he must have been no other than the conjurer who was said to have arrived in the town that day. In the meantime, while this point was under discussion, a clear, loud, but very mellow voice was heard about twenty yards above them, saying, "Stand aside, and make way—leave me room for a run."

The curiosity of the people was at once excited by what they had only a few minutes before pronounced to be a feat that was impossible to be accomplished. They accordingly opened a lane for the daring individual, who, they imagined, was about to submit himself to a scorching that might cost him his life. No sooner was the lane made, and the by-standers removed back, than a person evidently youthful, tall, elastic, and muscular, approached the burning mass with the speed and lightness of a deer, and flew over it as if he had wings. A tremendous shout burst forth, which lasted for more than a minute, and the people were about to bring him to receive his reward at the whiskey keg, when it was found that he also had disappeared. This puzzled them once more, and they began to think that there were

more present at these bonfires than had ever received baptism; for they could scarcely shake themselves free of the belief that the mysterious stranger either was something supernaturally evil himself, or else the conjurer as aforesaid, who, by all accounts, was not many steps removed from such a personage. Of the young person who performed this unprecedented and terrible exploit they had little time to take any notice. Torley Davoren, however, who was one of the spectators, turned round to his wife and whispered,

"Unfortunate boy—madman I ought to say—what devil tempted him to come here?"

"Was it him?" asked his wife.

"Whist, whist," he replied; "let us say no more about it."

In the meantime, although the youthful performer of this daring feat may be said to have passed among them like an arrow from a bow, yet it so happened that the secret of his identity did not rest solely with Torley Davoren. In a few minutes whisperings began to take place, which spread gradually through the crowd, until at length the name of *Shawn na Middogue* was openly pronounced, and the secret—*now* one no longer—was instantly sent abroad through the people, to whom his fearful leap was *now* no miracle. The impression so long entertained of his connection with the fairies was thus confirmed, and the black stranger was no other, perhaps, than the king of the fairies himself.

At this period of the proceedings Mrs. Lindsay, in consequence of some signifiant whispers which were directly levelled at her character, suggested to Maria that having seen enough of these wild proceedings, it

would be more advisable to return home—a suggestion to which Maria, whose presence there at all was in deference to her father's wishes, very gladly consented. They accordingly placed themselves under the escort of the redoubtable and gallant twins, and reached home in safety.

It was now expected that the quality would go down to the inn, where the largest room had been fitted up for refreshments and dancing, and into which none but the more decent and respectable classes were admitted. There most of the beauties of the town and the adjoining neighborhood were assembled, together with their admirers, all of whom entered into the spirit of the festivity with great relish. When Lindsay and his company were about to retire from the great bonfire, the conductors of the pageant, who also acted as spokesmen on the occasion, thus addressed them:

"It's right, your honors, that you should go and see the dancin' in the inn, and no harm if you shake a heel yourselves, besides taking something to wash the dust out o' your throats; but when you come out again, if you don't find a fresh and high blaze before you still, the devil's a witch."

As they proceeded toward the inn, the consequences of the drink, which the crowd had so abundantly received, began, here and there, to manifest many unequivocal symptoms. In some places high words were going on, in others blows; and altogether the affair seemed likely to terminate in a general conflict.

"Father," said his son Charles, "had you not better try and settle these rising disturbances?"

"Not I," replied the jovial magistrate; "let them

thrash one another till morning; they like it, and I make it a point never to go between the poor people and their enjoyments. Gadzooks, Charley, don't you know it would be a tame and discreditable affair without a row?"

"Yes;" but now that they've got drunk, they're cheering you, and groaning my mother."

"Devil's cure to her," replied his father; "if she didn't deserve it she'd not get it. What right had she to send my bailiffs to drive their cattle without my knowledge, and to take duty fowl and duty work from them whenever my back is turned, and contrary to my wishes? Come in till we have some punch; let them shout and fight away; it wouldn't be the thing, Charley, without it."

They found an exceedingly lively scene in the large parlor of the inn; but, in fact, every available room in the house was crowded. Then, after they had looked on for some time, every eye soon singled out the pride and beauty of the assembly in the person of Grace Davoren, whose features were animated into greater loveliness, and her eyes into greater brilliancy, by the light-hearted spirit which prevailed. She was dressed in her new drugget gown, had on her new shoes and blue stockings, a short striped blue and red petticoat, which displayed as much of her exquisite limbs as the pretty liberal fashion of the day allowed; her bust was perfection; and, as her black, natural ringlets fluttered about her milk-white neck and glowing countenance, she not only appeared inexpressibly beautiful, but seemed to feel conscious of that beauty, as was evident by a dash of pride—very charming,

indeed—which shot from her eye, and mantled on her beautiful cheek.

"Why, Charles," exclaimed Woodward, addressing his brother in a whisper, "who is that lovely peasant girl?"

"Her father is one of our tenants," replied Charles; "and she was about to be married some time ago, but it was discovered, fortunately in time, that her intended husband was head and leader of the outlaws that infest the country. It was he, I believe, that leaped over the bonfire."

"Was she fond of him?"

"Well, it is not easy to say that; some say she was, and others that she was not. Barney Casey says she was very glad to escape him when he became an outlaw."

"By the way, where is Barney? I haven't seen him since I came to look at this nonsense."

"Just turn your eye to the farthest corner of the room, and you may see him in his glory."

On looking in the prescribed direction, there, sure enough, was Barney discovered making love hard and fast to a pretty girl, whom Woodward remembered to have seen that morning in Mr. Goodwin's, and with whom he (Barney) had become acquainted when the families were on terms of intimacy. The girl sat smiling on his knee, whilst Barney, who had a glass of punch in his hand, kept applying it to her lips from time to time, and pressing her so lovingly toward him, that she was obliged occasionally to give him a pat upon the cheek, or to pull his whiskers. Woodward's attention, however, was transferred once more to Grace

Davoren, from whom he could not keep his eyes—a fact which she soon discovered, as was evident by a slight *hauteur* and affectation of manner toward many of those with whom she had been previously on an equal and familiar footing.

"Charles," said he, "I must have a dance with this beautiful girl; do you think she will dance with me?"

"I cannot tell," replied his brother, "but you can ask her."

"By the way, where are my father and the rest? They have left the room."

"The landlord has got them a small apartment," replied Charles, "where they are now enjoying themselves. If you dance with Grace Davoren, however, be on your good behavior, for if you take any unbecoming liberties with her, you may repent it; don't imagine because you see these humble girls allowing their sweethearts to kiss them in corners, that either they or their friends will permit *you* to do so."

"That's as it may be managed, perhaps," said Woodward, who immediately approached Grace in imitation of what he had seen, and making her a low bow, said,

"I dance to you, Miss Davoren, if you will favor me."

She was then sitting, but immediately rose up, with a blushing but gratified face, and replied,

"I will, sir, but I'm not worthy to dance with a gentleman like you."

"You are worthy to dance with a prince," he replied, as he led her to their station, fronting the music.

"Well, my pretty girl," said he, "what do you wish?"

"Your will, sir, is my pleasure."

"Very well. Piper," said he, "play up 'Kiss my lady;'" which was accordingly done, and the dance commenced. Woodward thought the most popular thing he could do was to affect no superiority over the young fellows present, but, on the contrary, to imitate their style and manner of dancing as well as he could; and in this he acted with great judgment. They felt flattered and gratified even at his awkward and clumsy imitations of their steps, and received his efforts with much laughter and cheering; nor was Grace herself insensible to the influence of the mirth he occasioned. On he went, cutting and capering, until he had them in convulsions; and when the dance was ended, he seized his partner in his arms, swung her three times round, and imprinted a kiss upon her lips with such good-humor that he was highly applauded. He then ordered in drink to treat her and her friends, which he distributed to them with his own hand; and after contriving to gain a few minutes' private chat with Grace, he amply rewarded the piper. He was now about to take his leave and proceed with his brother, when two women, one about thirty-five, and the other far advanced in years, both accosted him almost at the same moment.

"Your honor won't go," said the less aged of the two, "until you get your fortune tould."

"To be sure he won't, Caterine," they all replied; "we'll engage the gentleman will cross your hand wid silver; like his father before him, his heart's not in the money."

"Never mind her, sir," said the aged crone, "she's a schemer, and will tell you nothing but what she knows will plaise you. Show *me* your hand, sir, and I'll tell you the truth."

"Never mind the *calliagh*, sir, (old woman, by way of reproach;) she's dotin', and hasn't remembered her own name these ten years."

"It doesn't matter," said Woodward, addressing Caterine, "I shall hear what you both have to say—but you first."

He accordingly crossed her hand with a piece of silver, after which she looked closely into it—then upon his countenance, and said,

"You have two things in your mind, and they'll both succeed."

"But, my good woman, any one might tell me as much."

"No," she replied, with confidence; "examine your own heart and you'll find *the two things* there that it is fixed upon; and whisper," she added, putting her lips to his ear, "I know what they are, and can help you in both. When you want me, inquire for Caterine Collins. My uncle is Sol Donnell, the herb doctor."

He smiled and nodded, but made no reply.

"Now," said he, "my old crone, come and let me hear what *you* have to say for me;" and as he spoke another coin was dropped into her withered and skinny hand.

"Bring me a candle," said she, in a voice that whistled with age, and, if one could judge by her hag-like and repulsive features, with a malignity that was a habit of her life. After having inspected his palm

with the candle, she uttered three eldrich laughs, or rather screams, that sounded through the room as if they were more than natural. "Ha, ha, ha!" she exclaimed; "look here; there's the line of life stopped by a red instrument; that's not good; I see it, I feel it; your life will be short and your death violent; ay, indeed, the purty bonfire of your life, for all so bright as it burns, will be put out wid blood—and that soon."

"You're a d—d old croaker," said Woodward, "and take delight in predicting evil. Here, my good woman," he added, turning to the other, "there's an additional half-crown for you, and I won't forget your words."

He and Charles then joined their friends in the other room, and as it was getting late they all resolved to stroll once more through the town, in order to take a parting look at the bonfires, to wish the people good-night, and to thank them for the kindness and alacrity with which they got them up, and manifested their good feeling upon so short a notice. The large fire was again blazing, having been recruited with a fresh supply of materials. The crowd were looking on; many were staggering about, uttering a feeble huzza, in a state of complete intoxication, and the fool of the parish was attempting to dance a hornpipe, when large, blob-like drops began to fall, as happens at the commencement of a heavy shower. Lindsay put his hand to his face, on which some few of them had fallen, and, on looking at his fingers, perceived that they were spotted as if with blood!

"Good God!" he exclaimed, "what is this? Am I bleeding?"

They all stared at him, and then at each other, with dismay and horror; for there, unquestionably, was the hideous and terrible fact before them, and legible on every face around them—it was raining blood!

An awe, which we cannot describe, and a silence, deep as that of the grave, followed this terrible prodigy. The silence did not last long, however, for in a few minutes, during which the blood fell very thickly, making their hands and visages appear as if they had been steeped in gore—in a few moments, we say, the heavens, which had become one black and dismal mass, opened, and from the chasm issued a red flash of lightning, which was followed almost immediately by a roar of thunder, so loud and terrific that the whole people became fearfully agitated as they stood round the blaze. It was extremely difficult, indeed, for ignorant persons to account for, or speculate upon, this strange and frightful phenomenon. As they stood in fear and terror, with their faces apparently bathed in blood, they seemed rather to resemble a group of hideous murderers, standing as if about to be driven into the flames of perdition itself. To compare them to a tribe of red Indians surrounding their war fires, would be but a faint and feeble simile when contrasted with the terror which, notwithstanding the gory hue with which they were covered from top to toe, might be read in their terrified eyes and visages. After a few minutes, however, the alarm became more intense, and put itself forth in words. The fearful intelligence now spread. "It is raining blood! it is raining blood!" was shouted from every mouth; those who were in the houses rushed out, and soon found that it was true;

for the red liquid was still descending, and in a few minutes they soon were as red as the others. The flight home now became one of panic; every house was crowded with strangers, who took refuge wherever they could find a shelter; and in the meantime the lightning was flashing and the thunder pealing with stunning depth throughout the heavens. The bonfires were soon deserted; for even those who were drunk and tipsy had been aroused by the alarm, and the language in which it was uttered. Nobody, in fact, was left at the great fire except those who composed the dinner party, with the exception of the two clergymen, who fled and disappeared along with the mob, urged, too, by the same motives.

"This will not be believed," said Lindsay; "it is, beyond all doubt and scepticism, a prodigy from heaven, and must portend some fearful calamity. May God in heaven protect us! But who is this?"

As he spoke, a hideous old hag, bent over her staff, approached them; but it did not appear that she was about to pay them any particular attention. She was mumbling and cackling to herself when about to pass, but was addressed by Lindsay.

"Where are you going, you old hag? They say you are acquainted with more than you ought to know. Can you account for this blood that's falling?"

"Who are you that axes me?" she squeaked.

"I'm Mr. Lindsay, the magistrate."

"Ay," she screamed again, "it was for your son, Harry, *na Suil Gloir*,* that this bonfire was made to-

* *Suil Gloir* was an epithet bestowed on persons whose eyes were of different colors.

night. Well, he knows what I tould him, and let him think of it; but there will be more blood than this, and that before long, I can tell you and him."

So saying, she hobbled on, mumbling and muttering to herself like a witch rehearsing her incantations on her way to join their sabbath. They now turned their steps homewards, but had not proceeded far when the rain came down as it might be supposed to have done in the deluge; the lightnings flashed, the thunder continued to roar, and by the time they reached Rathfillan House they were absolutely drenched to the skin. The next morning, to the astonishment of the people, there was not visible a trace or fragment of the bonfires; every vestige of them had disappeared; and the general impression now was, that there must have been something evil and unhallowed connected with the individual for whom they had been prepared.

CHAPTER VI.

SHAWN-NA-MIDDOGUE—SHAN-DHINNE-DHUV, OR THE BLACK SPECTRE.

THE next evening was calm and mild; the sun shone with a serene and mellow light from the evening sky; the trees were green, and still; but the music of the blackbird and the thrush came sweetly from their leafy branches. Henry Woodward had been listening to a rather lengthy discussion upon the subject of the blood-shower, which, indeed, was the

topic of much conversation and great wonder throughout the whole parish. His father, a Protestant gentleman, and with some portion of education, although not much, was, nevertheless, deeply imbued with the superstitions which prevailed around him, as, in fact, were most of those who existed in his day; the very air which he breathed was rife with them; but what puzzled him and his family most was the difficulty which they found in shaping the prodigy into significance. Why it should take place, and upon such an occasion, they could not for their lives imagine. The only persons in the family who seemed altogether indifferent to it were Woodward and his mother, both of whom treated it with ridicule and contempt.

"It comes before some calamity," observed Mr. Lindsay.

"It comes before a fiddle-stick, Lindsay," replied his wife. "Calamity! yes; perhaps you may have a headache to-morrow, for which the world must be prepared by a storm of thunder and lightning and a shower of blood. The head that reels over night with an excess of wine and punch will ache in the morning without a prodigy to foretell it."

"Say what you will," he replied, "I believe the devil had a hand in it; and I tell you," he added, laughing, "that if you be advised by me, you'll begin to prepare yourself—'a stitch in time saves nine,' you know—so look sharp, I say."

"This, Harry," she said, addressing her son, "is the way your mother has been treated all along; yes, by a brutal and coarse-minded husband, who pays no attention to anything but his own gross and selfish enjoy-

ments; but, thank God, I have now some person to protect me."

"O, ho!" said her husband, "you are for a battle now. Harry, you don't know her. If she lets loose that scurrilous tongue of hers I have no chance; upon my soul, I'd encounter another half dozen of thunder-storms, and as many showers of blood, sooner than come under it for ten minutes; a West India hurricane is a zephyr to it."

"Ah, God help the unhappy woman that's blistered for life with an ignorant sot!—*such* a woman is to be pitied—and such a woman am I;—I, you good-for-nothing drunken booby, who made you what you are."

"O, fie! mamma," said Maria, "this is too bad to papa, who, you know, seldom replies to you at all."

"Miss Lindsay, I shall suffer none of your impertinence," said her mother; "leave the room, madam, this moment—how dare you? but I am not surprised at it;—leave the room, I say."

The poor, amiable girl, who was all fearfulness and affection, quietly left the room as she was desired, and her father, who saw that his worthy wife was brimful of a coming squall, put on his hat, and after having given her one of his usual sardonic looks, left the apartment also.

"Mother," said her son Charles, "I must protest against the unjustifiable violence of temper with which you treat my father. You know he was only jesting in what he said to you this moment."

"Let him carry his jests elsewhere, Mr. Charles," she replied, "he shan't indulge in them at my expense; nor will I have you abet him in them as you always do

—yes, sir, and laugh at them in my face. All this, however, is very natural; as the old cock crows the young one learns. As for Maria, if she makes as dutiful a wife as she does a daughter, her husband may thank God for getting his full share of evil in this life."

"I protest to heaven, Harry," said Charles, addressing his brother, "if ever there was a meek, sweet-tempered girl living, Maria is. You do not yet know her, but you will, of course, have an opportunity of judging for yourself."

"You perceive, Harry," said his mother, addressing him in turn; "you perceive how they are banded against me; in fact, they are joined with their father in a conspiracy to destroy my peace and happiness. This is the feeling that prevails against me in the house at large, for which I may thank my husband and children—I don't include you, Harry. There is not a servant in our establishment but could poison me, and probably would, too, were it not for fear of the gal lows."

Woodward listened to this strange scene with amazement, but was prudent enough to take no part in it whatsoever. On the contrary, he got his hat and proceeded out to take a stroll, as the evening was so fine, and the aspect of the country so delightful.

"Harry," said his brother, "if you're for a walk I'll go with you."

"Not at present, Charley," said he; "I am in a thoughtful mood, and generally prefer a lonely stroll on such a beautiful evening as this."

He accordingly went out, and bent his steps by a

long, rude green lane, which extended upwards of half a mile across a rich country, undulating with fields and meadows. This was terminated by a clump of hawthorn trees, then white and fragrant with their lovely blossoms, which lay in rich profusion on the ground. Contiguous to this was a small but delightful green glen, from the side of which issued one of those beautiful spring wells for which the country is so celebrated. Over a verdant little hill, which concealed this glen and the well we mention, from a few humble houses, or rather a decenter kind of cabins, was visible a beaten pathway by which the inhabitants of this small hamlet came for their water. Upon this, shaded as he was by the trees, he steadily kept his eye for a considerable time, as if in the expectation of some person who had made an appointment to meet him. Half an hour had nearly elapsed—the shades of evening were now beginning to fall, and he had just come to the resolution of retracing his steps, with a curse of disappointment on his lips, when, on taking another, and what he intended to be a last glance at the pathway in question, he espied the individual for whom he waited. This was no other than the young beauty of the neighborhood—Grace Davoren. She was tripping along with a light and merry step, lilting an Irish air of a very lively character, to which she could scarcely prevent herself from dancing, so elastic and buoyant were her spirits. On coming to the brow of the glen she paused a moment and cast her eye searchingly around her, but seemed after the scrutiny to hesitate about proceeding farther.

Woodward immediately showed himself, and after

beckoning to her, proceeded toward the well. She still paused, however, as if irresolute; but after one or two significant gestures on his part, she descended with a slow and apparently a timid step, and in a couple of minutes stood beside the well. The immediate purport of their conversation is not essential to this narrative; but, indeed, we presume that our readers may give a very good guess at it without any assistance from us. The beautiful girl was young, and credulous, and innocent, as might naturally be inferred from the confusion of her manner, and the tremulous tones of her voice, which, indeed, were seductive and full of natural melody. Her heart palpitated until its beatings might be heard, and she trembled with that kind of terror which is composed of apprehension and pleasure. That a *gentleman—one of the quality*—could condescend to feel any interest in a humble girl like her, was what she could scarcely have dreamed; but when he told her of her beauty, the natural elegance and symmetry of her figure, and added that he loved her better than any girl, either high or low, he had ever seen, she believed that his words were true, and her brain became almost giddy with wonder and delight. Then she considered what a triumph it was over all her female acquaintances, who, if they knew it, would certainly envy her even far more than they did already. After about half an hour's conversation the darkness set in, and she expressed an apprehension lest some of her family should come in quest of her—a circumstance, she said, which might be dangerous to them both. He then prevailed on her to promise another meeting, which at length she

did; but on his taking leave of her she asked him by which way he intended to go home.

"I came by the old green path," said he, "but intend to turn down the glen into the common road."

"O, don't go that way," said she; "if you do, you'll have to pass the haunted house, ay, and maybe, might meet the *Shan-dhinne-dhuv*."

"What is that," said he.

"O, Lord save us, sir," said she, "did you never hear of the *Shan-dhinne-dhuv?* A spirit, sir, that appears about the haunted house in the shape of a black ould man, and they say that nobody lives long afther seein' him three times."

"Yes; but did he ever take any person's life?"

"They say so, sir."

"When? How long ago?"

"Indeed, I can't tell that, sir; but sure every one says it."

"Well, what every one says must be true," he replied, smiling. "I, however, am not afraid of him, as I never go unarmed; and if I happen to meet him, trust me I will know what mettle he's made of before we part, or whether he belongs to this world or the other."

He then went down the glen, by the bottom of which the road went; and at a lonely place in a dark angle of it this far-famed spirit was said to appear.

This vain, but simple girl, the pride of her honest parents and all her simple relations and friends, took up her pitcher and proceeded with an elated heart by the pathway we have mentioned as leading to her father's house. We say her heart was elated at the notion of having engaged the affections of a handsome,

young, and elegant *gentleman*, but at the same time she felt a secret sense of error, if not of guilt, in having given him a clandestine meeting, and kept an appointment which she knew her parents and brothers would have heard with indignation and shame. She was confident, however, in her own strength, and resolved in her mind that Woodward's attachment for her never should terminate either in her disgrace or ruin. There were, however, many foolish and pernicious ballads sung about that period at the hearths of the peasantry, in which some lord or squire of high degree was represented to have fallen in love with some beautiful girl of humble life, whom he married in spite of his proud relations, and after having made her a lady of rank, and dressed her in silks and satins, gold rings and jewels, brought her home to his castle, where they lived in grandeur and happiness for the remainder of their lives. The simple-minded girl began to imagine that some such agreeable destiny might be reserved for herself; and thus endeavored, by the deceitful sophistry of a credulous heart, and proud of her beauty, to palliate her conduct amidst the accusations of her own conscience, which told her she was acting wrong.

She had now got about half way home, when she saw an individual approach her at a rapid pace; and as the moon had just risen, his figure was distinctly before her, and she immediately felt a strong impression of terror and alarm. The individual in question was young, tall, and muscular; his person had in it every symptom of extraordinary activity and vigor. His features, however, were not at all such as could be termed handsome; so far from that, they were rude and

stern, but not without a wild and disagreeable dignity. His eyes were at all times fierce and fiery, and gave unequivocal indications of a fierce and fiery spirit. He wore a pair of rude pantaloons that fitted closely to his finely made limbs, a short jacket or Wyliecoat that also fitted closely to his body, over which he wore the usual cloak of that day, which was bound about his middle with a belt and buckle, in which was stuck a middogue, or, as it ought to be written, *meadoige*, and pronounced *maddogay*. He wore a kind of cap or *barrad*, which, as well as his cloak, could by being turned inside out, instantly change his whole appearance, and mislead his pursuers—for he was the outlaw. Such was the startling individual who now approached her, and at whose fierce aspect she trembled—not less from her knowledge of the natural violence of his character than from a consciousness of her interview with Woodward.

"Well, Granua (Grace)," said he, quickly and with some vehemence, "where have you been?"

"At the well," she replied; "have you eyes in your head? Don't you see my pitcher?"

"I do; but what kept you there so long? and why is your voice tremblin', as if you wor afeard, or did something wrong? Why is your face pale, too?—it's not often so."

"The Lord save us, Shawn," replied Grace, attempting to treat those pointed interrogatories with a jocular spirit, "how can you expect me to answer such a catechize as you're puttin' to me at wanst."

"Answer me, in the mane time," he replied; "I'll have no doubling, Granua."

"Has anything vexed you, Shawn."

"*Chorp an diaoul!* tell me why you staid so long at the well"—and as he spoke his eyes flashed with resentment and suspicion.

"I did'nt stay long at it."

"I say you did. What kept you?"

"Why, bekaise I didn't hurry myself, but took my time. I was often longer."

"You were spakin' to some one at the well."

"Ah, thin, Shawn, who would I be spakin' to?"

"Maybe I know—I believe I do—but I want now to know whether you're a liar, as I suspect you to be, or whether you are honest enough to tell the truth."

"Do you suspect me, then?"

"I do suspect you; or rather I don't—bekaise I know the truth. Answer me—who wor you spakin' with?"

"Troth," said she, "I was lookin' at your sweetheart in the well," meaning her own shadow, "and was only asking her how she did."

"You danced with *Harry-na-Suil Balor* last night?"

"I did; because the gentleman axed me—and why would I refuse him?"

"You whispered in a corner with him?"

"I did not," she replied; "how could I when the room was so throng?"

"Ay, betther in a throng room than a thin one; ay, and you promised to meet him at the well to-night; and you kept your word."

A woman's courage and determination to persist in falsehood are never so decided and deliberate as when

she feels that the suspicion expressed against her is true. She then gets into heroics and attempts to turn the tables upon her opponent, especially when she knows, as Miss Davoren did on this occasion, that he has nothing *but* suspicion to support him. She knew that her lover had been at the bonfire, and that his friends must have seen her dance with Woodward; and this she did not attempt to deny, because she could not; but as for their tryste at the well, she felt satisfied, from her knowledge of his jealous and violent character, that if he *had* been aware of it, it would not have been by seeking the fact through the medium of his threats and her fears that he would have proceeded. Had he seen Woodward, for instance, and herself holding a secret meeting in such a place and at such an hour, she concluded justly that the *middogue* or dagger, for the use of which he had been already so celebrated, would have been brought into requisition against either one or both.

"I'll talk no more to you," she replied, with a flushed face; "for even if I tould you the truth, you wouldn't believe me. I did meet him, then; are you satisfied now?"

This admission was an able stroke of policy on her part, as the reader will soon perceive.

"O," he exclaimed, with a bitter, or, rather, a furious expression of face, "*dar manim*, if you had, you wouldn't dare to confess as much. But listen to me; if I ever hear or know, to my own satisfaction, that you meet him, or keep his company, or put yourself in his power, I'll send six inches of this"—and he pulled out the glittering weapon—"into your heart

and his; so now be warned and avoid him, and don't bring down my vengeance on you both."

"I don't see what right you have to bring me over the coals about any one. My father was forcin' me to marry you; but I now tell you to your teeth, that I never had the slightest intention of it. No! I wouldn't take the wealth of the barony, and be the wife of sich a savage murdherer. No man wid blood upon his hands and upon his sowl, as you have—a public robber, a murdherer, an outlaw—will ever be my husband. What right have you to tell me who I'm to spake to, or who I'm not to spake to?"

"Ah," he replied, "that wasn't your language to me not long ago."

"But you were a different boy then from what you are now. If you had kept your name free from disgrace and blood, I might have loved you; but I cannot love a man with such crimes to answer for as you have."

"You accuse me of shedding blood," he replied; "that is false. I have never shed blood nor taken life; but, on the contrary, did all in my power to prevent those who have placed me at their head from doin' so. Yet, when they did it in my absence, and against my orders, the blame and guilt is charged upon me because I am their leader. As for anything else I have done, I do not look upon it as a crime; let it rest upon the oppression that drove me and others to the wild lives we lead. We are forced to live now the best way we can, and that you know; but as to this *gentleman*, you musn't spake to him at any rate," he proceeded; "why should you? What 'ud make a man so high in life,

and so far above you as he is, strive to become acquainted with you, unless to bring about your ruin to gratify his own bad passions? Think of it, and bring it home to your heart. You have too many examples before your eyes, young as you are, of silly girls that allow themselves to be made fools of, and desaved and ruined by such scoundrels as this. Look at that unfortunate girl in the mountains there—Nannie Morrissey; look at her father hanged only for takin' God's just revenge, as he had a right to do, on the villain that brought destruction upon her and his innocent family, and black shame upon their name that never had a spot upon it before. After these words you may now act as you like; but remember that you have got *Shawn-na-Middogue's warning*, and you ought to know what that is."

He then started off in the same direction which Woodward had taken, and Grace, having looked after him with considerable indignation on her own part, and considerable apprehension on behalf of Woodward, took up her pitcher and proceeded home.

She now felt herself much disturbed, and experienced that state of mind which is often occasioned by the enunciation of that which is known to be truth, but which, at the same time, is productive of pain to the conscience, especially when that conscience begins to abandon the field and fly from its duty.

Woodward, as he had intended, preferred the open and common road home, although it was much longer, rather than return by the old green lane, which was rugged and uneven, and full of deep ruts, dangerous inequalities, and stumps of old trees, all of which ren-

dered it not only a disagreeable, but a dangerous, path by night. Having got out upon the highway, which here, and until he reached near home, was, indeed, solemn-looking and lonely, not a habitation except the haunted house being visible for upwards of two miles, he proceeded on his way, thinking of his interview with Grace Davoren. The country on each side of him was nearly a desert; a gray ruin, some of whose standing and isolated fragments assumed, to the excited imagination of the terrified peasants as they passed it by night, the appearance of supernatural beings, stood to the left, in the centre of an antiquated church-yard, in which there had not been a corpse buried for nearly half a century—a circumstance which always invests a graveyard with a more fearful character. As Woodward gazed at these still and lonely relics of the dead, upon which the faint rays of the moon gleamed with a spectral and melancholy light, he could not help feeling that the sight itself, and the associations connected with it, were calculated to fill weak minds with strong feelings of supernatural terror. His, however, was not a mind accessible to any such impressions; but at the same time he could make allowance for them among those who had seldom any other notions to guide them on such subjects than those of superstition and ignorance.

The haunted house, which was not yet in sight, he did not remember, nor was he acquainted with its history, with the exception of Grace's slight allusion to it. At length he came to a part of the road which was overhung, or rather altogether covered with long beech trees, whose huge arms met and intertwined with each other across it, filling the arch they made with a solemn

darkness even in the noon of day. At night, however, the obscurity was black and palpable; and such upon this occasion was its awful solemnity and stillness, and the sense of insecurity occasioned by the almost supernatural gloom about him, that Woodward could not avoid the idea that it afforded no bad conception of the entrance to the world of darkness and of spirits. He had not proceeded far, however, under this dismal canopy, when an incident occurred which tested his courage severely. As he went along he imagined that he heard the sound of human footsteps near him. This, to be sure, gave him at first no trouble on the score of anything supernatural. The country, however, was, as we have already intimated, very much infested with outlaws and robbers, and although Woodward was well armed, as he had truly said, and was no coward besides, yet it was upon this view of the matter that he experienced anything like apprehension. He accordingly paused, in order to ascertain whether the footsteps he heard might not have been the echo of his own. When his steps ceased, so also did the others; and when he advanced again so did they. He coughed aloud, but there was no echo; he shouted out "Is there any one there?" but still there was a dead stillness. At length he said again, "Whoever you may be, and especially if your designs be evil and unlawful, you had better beware; I am well armed, and both able and determined to defend myself; if money is your object, pass on, for I have none about me."

Again, there was the silence, as there was the darkness of the grave. He now resumed his former pace, and the noise of footsteps, evidently and distinctly dif

ferent from his own, were once more heard near him. Those that accompanied him fell upon his ear with a light, but strange and chilling sound, that filled him with surprise, and something like awe. In fact, he had never heard anything similar to it before. It was very strange, he thought, for the sounds, though light, were yet as distinct and well-defined as his own. He still held a pistol in each hand, and as he had no means of unravelling this mystery so long as he was inwrapped in such Cimmerian gloom, he resolved to accelerate his pace and get into the light of the moon as soon as he could. He accordingly did so; but the footsteps, although they fell not now so quickly as his own, still seemed to maintain the same distance from him as before. This certainly puzzled him; and he was attempting, if possible, to solve this new difficulty, when he found himself emerging from the darkness, and in a few moments standing in the light of the moon. He immediately looked about him, but except the usual inanimate objects of nature, he could see nothing. Whatever it is, thought he, or, rather, whoever it is, he has thought proper to remain undiscovered in the darkness. I shall now bid him good-night, and proceed on my way home. He accordingly moved on once more, when, to his utter astonishment, he heard the footsteps again, precisely within the same distance of him as before.

"Tut," said he, "I now perceive what the matter with me is. This is a mere hallucination, occasioned by a disordered state of the nerves; and as he spoke he returned his pistols into his breast pockets, where he usually wore them, and once more resumed his journey,

There was, however, something in the *sound* of the footsteps—something so hollow—so cold, as it were, and so unearthly, that he could not throw off the unaccountable impression which it made upon him, infidel and sceptic as he was upon all supernatural intimations and appearances. At length, he proceeded, or rather they proceeded, onward until he arrived within sight of what he supposed to be the haunted house. He paused a few moments, and was not now so insensible to its lonely and dismal aspect. It was a two-storied house, and nothing could surpass the spectral appearance of the moon's light as it fell with its pale and death-like lustre upon the windows. He stood contemplating it for some time, when, all at once, he perceived, walking about ten yards in advance of him, the shape of a man dressed in black from top to toe. It was not within the scope of human fortitude to avoid being startled by such a sudden and incomprehensible apparition. Woodward *was* startled; but he soon recovered himself, and after the first shock felt rather satisfied that he had some visible object with which he could make the experiment he projected, viz., to ascertain the nature, whether mortal or otherwise, of the being before him. With this purpose in view, he walked very quickly after him, and as the other did not seem to quicken his pace into a corresponding speed, he took it for granted that he would soon overtake him. In this, however, he was, much to his astonishment, mistaken. His own walk was quick and rapid, whilst that of this incomprehensible figure was slow and solemn, and yet he could not lessen the distance between them a single inch.

"Stop, sir," said Woodward, "whoever or whatever you are—stop, I wish to speak with you; be you mortal or spiritual, I fear you not—only stop."

The being before him, however, walked on at the same slow and solemn pace, but still persisted in maintaining his distance. Woodward was resolute, fearless—a sceptic, an infidel, a materialist—but here was a walking proposition in his presence which he could not solve, and which, up to that point, at least, had set all his theories at defiance. His blood rose—he became annoyed at the strange silence of the being before him, but more still at the mysterious and tardy pace with which it seemed to precede and escape him.

"I will follow it until morning," he said to himself, "or else I shall develop this startling enigma."

At this moment his mysterious fellow-traveller, after having advanced as if there had not been such an individual as Woodward in existence, now stood; he was directly opposite to the haunted house, and turning round, faced the tantalized and bewildered mortal. The latter looked on him; his countenance was the countenance of the dead—of the sheeted dead, stretched out in the bloodless pallor which lies upon the face of vanished life—of existence that is no more, at least in flesh and blood. Woodward approached him—for the thing had stood, as we have said, and permitted him to come within a few yards of him. His eyes were cold and glassy, and apparently without speculation, like those of a dead man open; yet, notwithstanding this, Woodward felt that they looked at him, if not into him.

"Speak," said he, "speak; who or what are you?"

He received no reply; but in a few seconds the apparition, if it were such, put his hand into his bosom, and, pulling out a dagger, which gleamed with a faint and visionary light, he directed it as if to his (Woodward's) heart. Three times he did this, in an attitude more of warning than of anger, when, at length, he turned and approached the haunted house, at the door of which he disappeared.

Woodward, as the reader must have perceived, was a strong-minded, fearless man, and examined the awful features of this inscrutable being closely.

"This, then," thought he, "is the *Shan-dhinne-dhuv*, or the *Black Spectre;* but, be it what it may, I am strongly of opinion that it was present at the bonfire last night, and as I am well armed, I will unquestionably pursue it into the house. Nay, what is more, I suspect that it is in some way or other connected with the outlaw *Shawn-na-Middogue*, who it was, they say, made that amazing leap over the aforesaid bonfire in my own presence."

On that very account, however, he reflected that such an intrusion might be attended with more danger than that to be apprehended from a ghost. He consequently paused for some time before he could decide on following up such a perilous resolution. While he thus stood deliberating upon the prudence of this daring exploit, he heard a variety of noises, and knockings, and rollings, as if of empty barrels, and rattling of chains, all going on inside, whilst the house itself appeared to be dark and still, without smoke from the chimneys or light in the windows, or any other symptom of being inhabited, unless by those who were pro-

ducing the wild and extraordinary noises he then heard.

"If I do not see this out," said he, "my account of it will go to add another page to the great volume of superstition. I am armed, not a whit afraid, and *I will* see it out, if human enterprise can effect it.''

He immediately entered the door, which he found, somewhat to his surprise, was only laid to, and, after listening for a few moments, resolved to examine the premises closely. In deference to the reader, whose nerves may not be so strong as those of Henry Woodward, and who consequently may entertain a very decided objection to enter a haunted house, especially one in such a lonely and remote situation, we will only say that he remained in it for at least an hour and a half; at the expiration of which time he left it, walked home in a silent and meditative mood, spoke little to his family, who were a good deal surprised at his abstracted manner, and, after sipping a tumbler of punch with his step-father, went rather gloomily to bed.

The next morning at breakfast he looked a good deal paler than they had yet seen him, and for some time his contribution to the family dialogue was rather scanty.

"Harry," said his mother, "what is the matter with you? You are silent, and look pale. Are you unwell?"

"No, ma'am," he replied, "I cannot say that I am. But, by the way, have you not a haunted house in the neighborhood, and is there not an apparition called the Black Man, or the Black Spectre, seen occasionally about the premises?"

"So it is said," replied Lindsay; "but none of this family has ever seen it, although I believe it has undoubtedly been seen by many persons in the neighborhood."

"What is supposed to have been the cause of its appearance?" asked Harry.

"Faith, Harry," replied his brother, "I fear there is nobody here can give you that information. To speak for myself, I never heard its appearance accounted for at all. Perhaps Barney Casey knows. Do you, father?"

"Not I," replied his father; "but as you say, Charley, we had better try Barney. Call him up."

"Perhaps," said Mrs. Lindsay, sharply and disdainfully, "it was the Black Spectre who produced the shower of blood last night."

"Faith, it's not unlikely," replied her husband, "if he be, as the people think, connected with the devil."

In a couple of minutes Barney entered to know what was wanted.

"Barney," said his master, "can you inform us who or what the *Shan-dhinne-dhuv* is, or why he appears in this neighborhood? Damn the fellow; he has that house of mine on my hands this many a long year, for I cannot get it set. I've had priests and parsons to lay him, and for some time we thought the country was free of him; but it was all to no purpose; he was still sure to return, and no earthly habitation should serve him but that unlucky house of mine. It is very odd that he never began to appear until after my second marriage."

"Sir," replied Barney, "I hard something about it; but I'm not clear on it. To tell you the truth, there's two or three accounts of him; but anyhow, sir, you're in luck for the right one; for if livin' man can give it to you, Bandy Brack, the pedler, is the man. He's now at his breakfast in the kitchen; but I'll have him up."

"Not to the parlor," said his mistress; "a strolling knave like him. Who ordered him his breakfast in the kitchen without my knowledge?" she asked. "The moment I can find out the person that dared to do so, that moment they shall leave my family. Must I keep an open house for every strolling vagabond in the country?"

"If you choose to turn *me* out," replied her husband, "you may try your hand at it. It was I ordered the poor man his breakfast; and, what is more, I desire you instantly to hold your peace."

As he spoke, she saw that one of his determined looks settled upon his countenance—a pretty certain symptom that she had better be guided by his advice.

"Come, Barney," said he, "throw up that window and send the poor man here, until he tells us what he knows about this affair."

The window was accordingly thrown open, and in a few minutes Bandy Brack made his appearance outside, and, upon being interrogated on the subject in question, took off his hat, and was about to commence his narrative, when Lindsay said,

"Put on your hat, Bandy; the sun's too hot to be uncovered."

"That's more of it," said his wife; "a fine way to make yourself respected, Lindsay."

"I love to be respected," he replied sternly, "and to deserve respect; but have no desire to incur the hatred of the poor by oppression and want of charity, like some of my *female* acquaintances."

"Plase your honor," said Bandy, "all that I know about the *Shan-dhinne-dhuv*, or the *Black Spectre*, as the larned call him, won't require many words to tell you. It's not generally known what I'm goin' to say now. The haunted house, as your honor, maybe, remimbers, was an inn—a carman's inn chiefly—and one night, it seems, there came a stranger to stop in it. He was dressed in black, and when he thought it time to go to bed he called the landlord, Antony McMurt, and placed in his hands a big purse 'o goold to keep for him till he should start at daybreak, as he intended, the next morning. Antony—"

"Ay," said Lindsay, interrupting him, "that accounts for the nature of the villain's death. I remember him well, Bandy, although I was only a boy at the time; go on—he was always a dishonest scoundrel it was said—proceed."

"Well *it seems*, Antony, sir, mistook him for a Protestant parson; and as he had a hankerin' afther the goold, he opened a gusset in the man's throat that same night, when the unsuspectin' traveller was sound in that sleep that he never woke from in this world. When the deed was done Antony stripped him of his clothes, and in doin' so discovered a silver crucifix upon his breast, and a bravery (breviary) under his head, by which he found that he had murdhered a

priest of his own religion in mistake. They say he stabbed him in the jigler vein wid a *middoge*. At all events, the body disappeared, and there never was any inquiry made about it—a good proof that the unfortunate man was a stranger. Well and good, your honor—in the coorse of a short time, *it seems*, the murdhered priest began to appear to him, and haunted him almost every night, until the unfortunate Antony began to get out of his rason, and, *it is said*, that when he appeared to him he always pointed the *middoge* at him, just as if he wished to put it into his heart. Antony then, widout tellin' out his own saicret, began to tell everybody that he was doomed to die *a bloody death*; in short, he became unsettled—got fairly beside himself, and afther mopin' about for some months in ordher to avoid the *bloody* death the priest threatened him wid, he went and hanged himself in the very room where he killed the unfortunate priest before."

"I remember when he hanged himself, very well," observed Lindsay, "but d—n the syllable of the robbery and murder of the priest or anybody else ever I heard of till the present moment, although there was an inquest held over himself. The man got low-spirited and depressed, because his business failed him, or, rather, because he didn't attend to it; and in one of these moods hanged himself; but by all accounts, Bandy, if he hadn't done the deed for himself the hangman would have done it for him. He was said, I think, to have been connected with some of the outlaws, and to have been a bad boy altogether. I think it is now near fifty years ago since he hanged himself."

"'*Tis said*, sir, that this account comes from one of

his own relations; but there's another account, sir, of the *Shan-dhinne-dhuv* that I don't believe a word of."

"Another—what is that, Bandy?"

"O, bedad, sir," replied Bandy, "it's more than I could venture to tell you *here*."

"Come, come—out with it."

Mrs. Lindsay went over with an inflamed face, and having ordered him to go about his business, slapped down the window with great violence, giving poor Bandy a look of wrath and intimidation that sealed his lips upon the subject of the *other* tradition he alluded to. He was, consequently, glad to escape from the threatening storm which he saw brewing in her countenance, and, consequently, made a very hasty retreat. Barney, who met him in the yard returning to fetch his pack from the kitchen, noticed his perturbation, and asked him what was the matter.

"May the Lord protect me from that woman's eye!" replied the pedler, "if you'd 'a' seen the look she gave me when she thought I was goin' to tell them the *true* story of the *Shan-dhinne-dhuv*."

"And why should she put a sword in her eye against you for that, Bandy?" asked the other.

Bandy looked cautiously about him, and said, in a whisper:

"Because it's connected wid *her* family, and follows it."

He then proceeded to the kitchen, and having secured his pack, he made as rapid a disappearance as possible from about the premises.

CHAPTER VII.

A COUNCIL OF TWO.—VISIT TO BEECH GROVE.—THE HERBALIST.

WOODWARD now amused himself by walking and riding about the country and viewing its scenery, most of which he had forgotten during his long absence from home. It was not at all singular in that dark state of popular superstition and ignorance, that the shower of blood should, somehow or other, be associated with him and his detested mother. Of course, the association was vague, and the people knew not how to apply it to their circumstances. As they believed, however, that Mrs. Lindsay possessed the power of overlooking cattle, which was considered an evil gift, and in some mysterious manner connected with the evil spirit, and as they remembered—for superstition, like guilt, always possesses a good memory—that even in his young days, when little more than a child, her son Harry was remarkable for having eyes of a different color, from which circumstance he was even then called *Harry na Suil Gloir*, they naturally inferred that his appearance in the country boded nothing good; that, of course, he had the Evil Eye, as every one whose eyes differed, as his did, had; and that the thunder and lightning, the rain which drowned the bonfires, but, above all, the blood-shower, were indi-

cations that the mother and son were to be feared and avoided as much as possible, especially the latter. Others denied that the devil had anything to do with the shower of blood, or the storm which extinguished the fires, and stoutly maintained that it was God himself who had sent them to warn the country against having any intercourse that could possibly be avoided, with them. Then there was the Black Spectre that was said to follow *her* family; and did not every one know that when it appeared three times to any person, it was a certain proof that that person's coffin might be purchased? We all know how rapidly such opinions and colloquies spread, and we need scarcely say that in the course of a fortnight after the night of the bonfires all these matters had been discussed over half the barony. Some, in fact, were for loading him with the heavy burden of his mother's unpopularity; but others, more generous, were for waiting until the people had an opportunity of seeing how he might turn out—whether he would follow in his mother's footsteps, or be guided by the benevolent principles of his step-father and the rest of the family. Owing to these circumstances, need we say, that there was an unusual interest, almost an excitement, felt about him, which nothing could repress. His brother Charles was as well-beloved and as popular as his father, but, then, he excited no particular interest, because he was not suspected to possess the Evil Eye, nor to have any particular connection with the devil.

In this case matters stood, when one day Woodward, having dressed himself with particular care, ordered his horse, saying that he would ride over to

Beechgrove and pay a visit to the Goodwins. There were none in the room at the time but Charles and his mother. The former started, and seemed uneasy at this intelligence; and his mother, having considered for a time, said:

"Charles, I wish to speak to Harry."

Charles took the hint, and left the mother and son to the following dialogue:—

"Harry," said she, "you spoke very warmly of that cunning serpent who defrauded you of your inheritance, and all of us out of our right. May I ask for what purpose you wish to cultivate an intimacy with such a scheming and dishonest crew as that?"

"Faith, mother, to tell you the truth, you don't detest them, nor feel the loss of the property more than I do; but the truth is, that the game I wish to play with them will be a winning one, if I can induce them to hold the cards. I wish to get the property, and as I feel that that can't be done without marrying their milk-and-curd of a daughter, why, it is my intention to marry her accordingly."

"Then you don't marry a wife to be happy with her?"

"In one sense not I—in another I do; I shall make myself happy with her property."

"Indeed, Harry, to tell you the truth, there is very little happiness in married life, and they are only fools that expect it. You see how I am treated by Lindsay and my own children."

"Well, but you provoke them—why disturb yourself with them? Why not pass through life as quietly as you can? Imitate Lindsay."

"What! make a sot of myself—become a fool, as he is?"

"Then, why did you marry him?"

"Because *I* was the fool then, but I have suffered for it. Why, he manages this property as if it wasn't mine—as if I didn't bring it to him. Think of a man who is silly enough to forgive a tenant his gale of rent, provided he makes a poor mouth, and says he is not able to pay it."

"But I see no harm in that either; if the man is not able to pay, how can he? What does Lindsay do but make a virtue of necessity. He cannot skin a flint, can he?"

"That's an ugly comparison," she replied, "and I can't conceive why you make it *to me.* I am afraid, Harry, you have suffered yourself to be prejudiced against the only friend—the only true friend, you have in the house. I can tell you, that although they keep fair faces to you, you are not liked here."

"Very well; if I find that to be true, they will lose more than they'll gain by it."

"They have been striving to secure your influence against me. I know it by your language."

"In the devil's name, how can you know it by my language, mother?"

"You talked about skinning a flint; now, you had that from them with reference to me. It was only the other day that an ill-tongued house-maid of mine, after I had paid her her wages, and 'stopped' for the articles she injured on me, turned round, and called me a skin flint; they have made it a common nickname on me. I'd have torn her eyes out only for Lindsay, who had

the assurance to tell me that if he had not interfered I'd have had the worst of it—that I'd come off second best, and such slang; yes, and then added afterwards, that he was sorry he interfered. That's the kind of a husband he is, and that's the life I lead. Now, this property is mine, and I can leave it to any one I please; he hasn't even a life interest in it."

"O," exclaimed the son, in surprise, "is that the case?"

"It is," she replied, "and yet you see how I am treated."

"I was not aware of that, my dear mother," responded worthy Harry. "That alters the case entirely. Why, Lindsay, in these circumstances, ought to put his hands under your feet; so ought they all, I think. Well, my dear mother, of one thing I can assure you, no matter how they may treat you, calculate firmly upon my support and protection; make yourself sure of that. But, now, about Miss Milk-and-curds—what do yo think of my project?"

"I have been frequently turning it over in my mind, Harry, since the morning you praised her so violently, and I think, as you cannot get the property without the girl, you must only take her with it. The notion of its going into the hands of strangers would drive me mad."

"Well, then, we understand each other; I have your sanction for the courtship."

"You have; but I tell you again, I loathe her as I do poison. I never can forgive her the art with which she wheedled that jolter-headed old sinner, your uncle, out of twelve hundred a year. Unless it returns to

the family, may my bitter malediction fall upon her and it."

"Well, never mind, my dear mother, leave her to me—I shall have the girl and the property—but by hook or crook, the property. I shall ride over there, now, and it will not be my fault, if I don't tip both her and them the saccharine."

"By the way, though, Harry, now that I think of it, I'm afraid you'll have opposition."

"Opposition! How is that?"

"It is said there is a distant relation of theirs, a gentleman named O'Connor, a Ferdora O'Connor, I think, who, it is supposed, is likely to be successful there; but, by the way, are you aware that they are Catholics?"

"As to that, my dear mother, I don't care a fig for her religion; my religion is her property, or rather will be so when I get it. The other matter, however, is a thing I must look to—I mean the rivalry; but on that, too, we shall put our heads together, and try what can be done. I am not very timid; and the proverb says, you know, a faint heart never won a fair lady."

Our readers may perceive, from the spirit of the above conversation, that the son was worthy of the mother, and the mother of the son. The latter, however, had, at least, some command over his temper, and a great deal of dexterity and penetration besides; whilst the mother, though violent, was clumsy in her resentments, and transparent in her motives. Short as Woodward's residence in the family was, he saw at a glance that the abuse she heaped upon her husband

and children was nothing more nor less than deliberate falsehood. This, however, to him was a matter of perfect indifference. He was no great advocate of truth himself, whenever he found that his interests or his passions could be more effectually promoted by falsehood; although he did not disdain even truth whenever it equally served his purpose. In such a case it gave him a reputation for candor under which he could, with more safety, avail himself of his disingenuity and prevarication. He knew, as we said, that his mother's description of the family contained not one atom of truth; and yet he was too dastardly and cunning to defend them against her calumny. The great basis of his character, in fact, was, a selfishness, which kept him perpetually indifferent to anything that was good or generous in itself, or outside the circle of his own interests, beyond which he never passed. Now, nothing, on the other hand, could be more adversative to this, than the conduct, temper, and principles of his brother and sister. Charles was an amiable, manly, and generous young fellow, who, with both spirit and independence, was, as a natural consequence, loved and respected by all who knew him; and as for his sweet and affectionate sister, Maria, there was not living a girl more capable of winning attachment, nor more worthy of it when attained; and severely, indeed, was the patience of this admirable brother and sister tried, by the diabolical temper of their violent and savage mother. As for Harry, he had come to the resolution, now that he understood the position of the property, to cultivate his mother's disposition upon such a principle of con-

duct as would not compromise him with either party. As to their feuds he was perfectly indifferent to them; but now his great object was, to study how to promote his own interests in his own way.

Having reached Beechgrove, he found that unassuming family at home, as they usually were; for, indeed all their principal enjoyments lay within the quiet range of domestic life. Old Goodwin himself saw him through the parlor window as he approached, and, with ready and sincere kindness, met him in the hall.

"I am very glad to see you, Mr. Woodward," said he. "Allow me to conduct you to the drawing-room, where you will meet Mrs. Goodwin, Alice, and a particular friend of ours. I cannot myself stop long with you, because I am engaged on particular business; but you will not miss an old fellow like me when you have better company. I hope my old friends are all well. Step in, sir. Here is Mr. Woodward, ladies; Mr. Woodward, this gentleman is a friend of ours, Mr. Ferdora O'Connor; Ferdora, this is Mr. Woodward; and now I must leave you to entertain each other; but I shall return, Mr. Woodward, before you go, unless you are in a great hurry. Bridget, see that luncheon is ready; but you must lay it in the front parlor, because I have these tenants about me in the dining-room, as it is so much larger."

"I have already given orders for that," replied his wife. He then hurried out and left them, evidently much gratified by Woodward's visit. O'Connor and the latter having scanned each other by a glance or two, bowed with that extreme air of politeness which

is only another name for a want of cordiality. O'Connor was rather a plain-looking young fellow, as to his person and general appearance; but his Milesian face was handsome, and his eye clear and candid, with a dash of determination and fire in it. Very different, indeed, was it from the eye that was scrutinizing him at that moment, with such keenness and penetration. There are such things as antipathies; otherwise why should those two individuals entertain, almost in a moment's time, such a secret and unaccountable disrelish towards each other? Woodward did not love Alice, so that the feeling could not proceed from jealousy; and we will so far throw aside mystery as to say here, that neither did O'Connor; and, we may add still further, that poor, innocent, unassuming Alice was attached to neither of them.

"I hope your brother is well, sir," said O'Connor, anxious to break the ice, and try the stuff Woodward was made of. "I have not seen him for some time."

"O! then, you are acquaintances?" said Woodward.

"We are more, sir," replied O'Connor, "we are friends."

"I hope you are *all* well," interrupted kind-hearted Mrs. Goodwin.

"Quite well, my dear madam," he replied. Then turning to O'Connor: "To be a friend to my brother, sir," he said, "next to finding you a friend and favorite in this family, is the warmest recommendation to me. My long absence from home prevented me from knowing his value until now; but now that I do know him, I say it, perhaps, with too much of the partiality of a brother, I think that any man may feel proud of

his friendship; and I say so with the less hesitation, because I am sure he would select no man for his friend who was not worthy of it;" and he bowed courteously as he spoke.

"Faith, sir," replied O'Connor, "you have hit it; I for one am proud of it; but, upon my conscience, he wouldn't be his father's son if he wasn't what he is."

Alice was sewing some embroidery, and seemed to take no notice, if one could judge by her downcast looks, of what they said. At length she said, with a smile:

"As you, Ferdora, have inquired for *your* favorite, I don't see why I should not inquire after *mine;* how is your sister, Mr. Woodward?"

"Indeed, she's the picture of health, Miss Goodwin; but I will not"—he added, with a smile to balance her own—"I will not be answerable for the health of her heart."

Alice gave a low laugh, that had the slightest tincture of malice in it, and glanced at O'Connor, who began to tap his boot with his riding whip.

"She is a good girl as ever lived," said Mrs. Goodwin, "and I hope will never have a heartache that may harm her."

"Heaven knows, madam," replied Woodward, "it is time only that will tell that. Love is a strange and sometimes rather a painful malady."

"Of course you speak from your own experience, Mr. Woodward," replied Alice.

"Then you have had the complaint, sir," said O'Connor, laughing. "I wonder is it like small-pox or measles?"

"How is that, sir?" said Woodward, smiling.

"Why, that if you've had it once you'll never have it a second time."

"Yes, but if I should be ill of it now?" and he glanced at Alice, who blushed.

"Why, in that case," replied O'Connor, "it's in bed you ought to be; no man with an epidemic on him should be permitted to go abroad among his majesty's liege subjects."

"Yes, Ferdora," said Alice, "but I don't think Mr. Woodward's complaint is catching."

"God forbid that the gentleman should die of it, though," replied Ferdora, "for that would be a serious loss to the ladies."

"You exaggerate that calamity, sir," replied Woodward, with the slightest imaginable sneer, "and forget that if *I* die *you* survive me."

"Well, certainly, there *is* consolation in that," said O'Connor, "especially for the ladies, as I said; isn't there, Alley?"

"Certainly," replied Alice; "in making love, Ferdora, you have the prowess of ten men."

"Do *you* speak from experience, *now*, Miss Goodwin?" asked Woodward. rather dryly.

"O! no," replied Alice, "I have only his own word for it."

"*Only* his own word, Miss Goodwin! Do you imply by that, that his own word requires corroboration?"

Alice blushed again, and felt confused.

"I assure you, Mr. Woodward," said O'Connor, "that when *my* word requires corroboration, I always corroborate it myself."

"But, according to Miss Goodwin's account of it, sir, that's not likely to add much to its authenticity."

"Well, Mr. Woodward," said O'Connor, with the greatest suavity of manner, "I'll tell you my method under such circumstances; whenever I meet a gentleman that doubts *my* word, I always make him *eat his own*."

"There's nothing new or wonderful in that," replied the other; "it has been my own practice during life."

"What? to eat your own words!" exclaimed O'Connor, purposely mistaking him; "very windy feeding, faith. Upon my honor and conscience, in that case, your complaint must be nothing else but the colic, and not love at all. Try peppermint wather, Mr. Woodward."

Alice saw at once, but could not account for the fact, that the worthy gentlemen were *cutting at* each other, and the timid girl became insensibly alarmed at the unaccountable sharpness of their brief encounter. She looked with an anxious countenance, first at one, and then at the other, but scarcely knew what to say. Woodward, however, who was better acquainted with the usages of society, and the deference due to the presence of women, than the *brusque*, but somewhat fiery Milesian, now said, with a smile and a bow to that gentleman:

"Sir, I submit; I am vanquished. If you are as successful in love as you are in banter, I should not wish to enter the lists against you."

"Faith, sir," replied O'Connor, with a good-humored laugh, "if your sword is as sharp as your wit, you'd be an ugly customer to meet in a quarrel."

O'Connor, who had been there for some time, now rose to take his leave, at which Alice felt rather satisfied. Indeed, she could not avoid observing that, whatever the cause of it might be, there seemed to exist some secret feeling of dislike between them, which occasioned her no inconsiderable apprehension. O'Connor she knew was kind-hearted and generous, but, at the same time, as quick as gunpowder in taking and resenting an insult. On the other hand, she certainly felt much regret at being subjected to the presence of Woodward, against whom she entertained, as the reader knows, a strong feeling that amounted absolutely to aversion. She could not, however, think of treating him with anything bordering on disrespect, especially in her own house, and she, consequently, was about to say something merely calculated to pass the time. In this, however, she was anticipated by Woodward, who, as he had his suspicions of O'Connor, resolved to sound her on the subject.

"That seems an agreeable young fellow," said he; "somewhat free and easy in his deportment."

"Take care, Mr. Woodward," said her mother; "say nothing harsh against Ferdora, if you wish to keep on good terms with Alley. He's the white-headed boy with *her*."

"I am not surprised at that, madam," he replied, "possessed as he is of such a rare and fortunate quality."

"Pray, what is that, Mr. Woodward?" asked Alice, timidly.

"Why, the faculty of making love with the power of ten men," he replied.

"You must be a very serious man," she replied.

"Serious, Miss Goodwin! Why do you think so?"

"I hope you are not in the habit of receiving a jest as a matter of fact."

"Not," he replied, "if I could satisfy myself that there was no fact in the jest; but, indeed, in this world, Miss Goodwin, it is very difficult to distinguish jest from earnest."

"I am a bad reasoner, Mr. Woodward," she replied.

"But, perhaps, Miss Goodwin, Mr. O'Connor would say that you make up in feeling what you want in logic."

"I hope, sir," replied Alice, with some spirit—for she felt hurt at his last observation—"that I will never feel on any subject until I have reason as well as inclination to support me."

"Ah," said he, "I fear that if you once possess the inclination you will soon supply the reason. But, by the way, talking of your friend and favorite, Mr. O'Connor, I must say I like him very much, and I am not surprised that you do."

"I do, indeed," she replied; "I know of nobody I like better than honest, frank, and generous Ferdora."

"Well, Miss Goodwin, I assure you he shall be a favorite of mine for your sake."

"Indeed, Mr. Woodward, if you knew him, he would become one for his own."

"Have you known him long, may I ask, Miss Goodwin?"

"O dear, yes," said Mrs. Goodwin, who now, finding this a fair opening in the conversation, resolved to have

her share of it—"O dear! yes; Alley and he know each other ever since her childhood; he's some three or four years older than she is, to be sure, but that makes little difference."

"And, I suppose, Mrs. Goodwin, their intimacy—perhaps I may say attachment—has the sanction of their respective families?"

"God bless you, sir, to be sure it has—are they not distantly related?"

"That, indeed, is a very usual proceeding among families," observed Woodward; "the boy and girl are thrown together, and desired to look upon each other as destined to become husband and wife; they accordingly do so, fall in love, are married, and soon find themselves—miserable; in fact, these matches seldom turn out well."

"But there is no risk of that here," replied Alice.

"I sincerely hope not, Miss Goodwin. In your case, unless the husband was a fool, or a madman, or a villain, there *must* be happiness. Of course you will be happy with him; need I say," and here he sighed, "that he at least ought to be so with you?"

"Upon my word, Mr. Woodward," replied Alice, smiling, "you are a much cleverer man than I presume your own modesty ever permitted you to suspect."

"I don't understand you," he replied, with a look of embarrassment.

"Why," she proceeded, "here have you, in a few minutes, made up a match between two persons who never were intended to be married at all; you have got the sanction of two families to a union which

neither of them even for a moment contemplated. Dear me, sir, may not a lady and gentleman become acquainted without necessarily falling in love?"

"Ah, but, in your case, my dear Miss Goodwin, it would be difficult—impossible I should say—to remain indifferent, if the gentleman had either taste or sentiment; however, I assure you I am sincerely glad to find that I have been mistaken."

"God bless me, Mr. Woodward," said Mrs. Goodwin, "did you think they were sweethearts?"

"Upon my honor, madam, I did—and I was very sorry for it."

"Mr. Woodward," replied Alice, "don't mistake me; I am inaccessible to flattery."

"I am delighted to hear it," said he, "because I know that for that reason you are not and will not be insensible to truth."

"Unless when it borrows the garb of flattery, and thus causes itself to be suspected."

"In that case," said Woodward, "nothing but good sense, Miss Goodwin, can draw the distinction between them—and now I know that you are possessed of that."

"I hope so, sir," she replied, "and that I will ever continue to observe that distinction. Mamma, I want more thread," she said; "where can I get it?"

"Up stairs, dear, in my work-box."

She then bowed slightly to Woodward and went up to find her thread, but in fact from a wish to put an end to a conversation that she felt to be exceedingly disagreeable. At this moment old Goodwin came in.

"You will excuse me, I trust, Mr. Woodward," said

he, "I was down in the dining-room receiving rents for ——." He paused, for, on reflection, he felt that this was a disagreeable topic to allude to; the fact being that he acted as his daughter's agent, and had been on that and the preceding day receiving her rents. "Martha," said he, "what about luncheon? You'll take luncheon with us, Mr. Woodward?"

Woodward bowed, and Mrs. Goodwin was about to leave the room, when he said:

"Perhaps, Mrs. Goodwin, you'd be good enough to remain for a few minutes." Mrs. Goodwin sat down, and he proceeded: "I trust that my arrival home will, under Providence, be the means of reconciling and re-uniting two families who never should have been at variance. Not but that I admit, my dear friends,—if you will allow me to call you so,—that the melancholy event of my poor uncle's death, and the unexpected disposition of so large a property, were calculated to try the patience of worldly-minded people—and who is not so in a more or less degree?"

"I don't think any of your family is," replied Goodwin, bluntly, "with one exception."

"O! yes, my mother," replied Woodward, "and I grant it; at least she was so, and acted upon worldly principles; but I think you will admit, at least as Christians you must, that the hour of change and regret may come to every human heart when its errors, and its selfishness, if you will, have been clearly and mildly pointed out. I do not attribute the change that has happily taken place in my dear mother to myself, but to a higher power; although I must admit, as I do with all humility, that I wrought earnestly, in season

and out of season, since my return, to bring it about; and, thank heaven, I have succeeded. I come this day as a messenger of peace, to state that she is willing that the families should be reconciled, and a happier and more lasting union effected between them."

"I am delighted to hear it, Mr. Woodward," said Goodwin, much moved; "God knows I am. Blessed be the peace-maker, and you are he; an easy conscience and a light heart must be your reward."

"They must," added his wife, wiping her eyes; "they must, and they will."

"Alas!" proceeded Woodward, "how far from Gospel purity is every human motive when it comes to be tried by the Word! I will not conceal from you the state of my heart, nor deny that in accomplishing this thing it was influenced by a certain selfish feeling on my part; in one sense a disinterested selfishness I admit, but in another a selfishness that involves my own happiness. However, I will say no more on that subject at present. It would scarcely be delicate until the reconciliation is fully accomplished; then, indeed, perhaps I may endeavor, with fear and trembling, to make myself understood. Only until then, I beg of you to think well of me, and permit me to consider myself as not unworthy of a humble place in your affections."

Old Goodwin shook him warmly by the hand, and his wife once more had recourse to her pocket-handkerchief. "God bless you, Mr. Woodward!" he exclaimed; "God bless you. I now see your worth, and know it; you already have our good-will and affections, and, what is more, we feel that you deserve them."

"I wish, my dear sir," said the other, "that Miss

Goodwin understood me as well as you and her respected mother."

"She does, Mr. Woodward," replied her father; "she does, and she will, too."

"I tremble, however," said Woodward, with a deep sigh; "but I will leave my fate in your hands, or, I should rather say, in the hands of Heaven."

Lunch was then announced, and they went down to the front parlor, where it was laid out. On entering the room Woodward was a good deal disappointed to find that Miss Goodwin was not there.

"Will not Miss Goodwin join us?" he asked.

"Certainly," said her father; "Martha, where is she?"

"You know, my dear, she seldom lunches," replied her mother.

"Well, but she will now," said Goodwin; "it is not every day we have Mr. Woodward; let her be sent for. John, find out Miss Goodwin, and say we wish her to join us at luncheon."

John in a few moments returned to say that she had a slight headache, and could not have the pleasure of coming down.

"O! I am very sorry to hear she is unwell," said Woodward, with an appearance of disappointment and chagrin, which he did not wish to conceal; or, to speak the truth, which, in a great measure, he assumed.

After lunch his horse was ordered, and he set out on his way to Rathfillan, meditating upon his visit, and the rather indifferent reception he had got from Alice.

Miss Goodwin, though timid and nervous, was, nev-

ertheless, in many things, a girl of spirit, and possessed a great deal of natural wit and penetration. On that day Woodward exerted himself to the utmost, with a hope of making a favorable impression upon her. He calculated a good deal upon her isolated position and her necessary ignorance of life and the world, and in doing so, he calculated, as thousands of self-sufficient libertines, in their estimate of women, have done both before and since. He did not know that there is an intuitive spirit in the female heart which often enables it to discover the true character of the opposite sex; and to discriminate between the real and the assumed with almost infallible accuracy. But, independently of this, there was in Woodward's manner a hardness of outline, and in his conversation an unconscious absence of all reality and truth, together with a cold, studied formality, dry, sharp, and presumptuous, that required no extraordinary penetration to discover; for the worst of it was, that he made himself disagreeably felt, and excited those powers of scrutiny and analysis that are so peculiar to the generality of the other sex. In fact, he sought his way home in anything but an agreeable mood. He thought to have met Alice an ignorant country girl, whom he might play upon; but he found himself completely mistaken, because, fortunately for herself, he had taken her upon one of her strong points. As it was, however, whilst he could not help admiring the pertinence of her replies, neither could he help experiencing something of a bitter feeling against her, because she indulged in them at his own expense; whilst against O'Connor, who bantered him with such spirit and success, and

absolutely turned him into ridicule in her presence, he almost entertained a personal resentment. His only hope now was in her parents, who seemed as anxious to entertain his proposals with favor as Alice was to reject them with disdain. As for Alice herself, her opinion of him is a matter with which the reader is already acquainted.

Our hero was about half-way home when he overtook a thin, lank old man, who was a rather important character in the eyes of the ignorant people at the period of which we write. He was tall, and so bare of flesh, that when asleep he might pass for the skeleton of a corpse. His eyes were red, cunning, and sinister-looking; his lips thin, and from under the upper one projected a single tooth, long and yellow as saffron. His face was of unusual length, and his parchment cheeks formed two inward curves, occasioned by the want of his back teeth. His breeches were open at the knees; his polar legs were without stockings; but his old brogues were *foddered*, as it is called, with a wisp of straw, to keep his feet warm. His arms were long, even in proportion to his body, and his bony fingers resembled claws rather than anything else we can now remember. They (the claws) were black as ebony, and resembled in length and sharpness those of a cat when she is stretching herself after rising from the hearth. He wore an old *barrad* of the day, the greasy top of which fell down upon the collar of his old cloak, and over his shoulder was a bag, which, from its appearance, must have contained something not very weighty, as he walked on without seeming to travel as a man who carried

a burden. He had a huge staff in his right hand, the left having a hold of his bag. Woodward at first mistook him for a mendicant, but upon looking at him more closely, he perceived nothing of that watchful and whining cant for alms which marks the character of the professional beggar. The old skeleton walked on, apparently indifferent and independent, and never once put himself into the usual posture of entreaty. This, and the originality of his appearance, excited Woodward's curiosity, and he resolved to speak to him.

"Well, my good old man, what may you be carrying in the bag?"

The man looked at him respectfully, and raising his hand and staff touched his *barrad*, and replied:

"A few yarribs, your honor."

"Yarribs! What the deuce is that?"

"Why, the yarribs that grow, sir—to cure the peo ple when they're sick."

"O, you mean herbs."

"I do, sir, and I gather them too for the potecars."

"O, then you are what they call a herbalist."

"I believe I am, sir, if you put that word against (to) a man that gethers yarribs."

"Yes, that's what I mean. You sell them to the apothecaries, I suppose?"

"I do a little, sir, but I use the most of them myself. Sorra much the potecars knows about the use o' them; they kill more than they cure wid 'em, and calls thim that understands what they're good for rogues and quacks. May the Lord forgive them this day! *Amin, acheernah!* (Amen, O Lord!)"

"And do you administer these herbs to the sick?"

"I do, sir, to the sick of all kinds—man and baste There's nothing like them, sir, bekaise it was to cure diseases of all kinds that the Lord, blessed be His name! *amin, acheernah!* planted them in the earth for the use of his cratures. Why, sir, will you listen to me now, and mark my words? There never was a complaint that follied either man or baste, brute or bird, but a yarrib grows that 'ud cure it if it was known. When the head's hot wid faver, and the heart low wid care, the yarrib is to be found that will cool the head and rise the heart."

"Don't you think, now," said Woodward, imagining that he would catch him, "that a glass of wine, or, what is better still, a good glass of punch, would raise the heart better than all the herbs in the universe?"

"Lord bless me!" he exclaimed, as if in soliloquy; "the ignorance of the rich and wealthy, and of great people altogether, is unknown! Wine and punch! And what, will you tell me, does wine and punch come from? Doesn't the wine come from the grapes that grow in forrin parts—sich as we have in our hothouses—and doesn't the whiskey that you make your punch of grow from the honest barley in our own fields? So much for your knowledge of yarribs."

"Why, there you are right, my old friend. I forgot that."

"You forgot it? Tell the truth at once, and say you didn't know it. But maybe you did forget it, for troth he'd be a poor crature that didn't know that whiskey is made from barley."

He here turned his red satirical eye upon Woodward, with a glance that was strongly indicative of contempt for his general information.

"Well, he proceeded, "the power of yarribs is wondherful,—if it was known to many as it is to me."

"Why, from long practice, I suppose, you must be skilful in the properties of herbs?"

"Well, indeed, you need'nt only suppose it, but you may be sartin of it. Have you a good appetite?"

"A particularly good one, I assure you."

"Now, wouldn't you think it strange that I could give you a dose that 'ud keep you on half a male a day for the next three months?"

"God forbid," replied Woodward, who, among his other good qualities, was an enormous trencherman,—"God forbid that ever such a dose should go down my throat."

"Would you think, now," he proceeded, with a sinister grin that sent his yellow tusk half an inch out of his mouth, "that if a man was jealous of his wife, or a wife of her husband, I couldn't give aither o' them a dose that 'ud cure them?"

"Faith, I dare say you could," replied Woodward; "a dose that would free them from care of all sorts as well as jealousy."

"I don't mane that," said the skeleton; "ha, ha! you're a funny gentleman, and maybe I—but no—I don't mane that; but widout injurin' a hair in aither o' their heads."

"I am not married," said the other, "but I expect to be soon, and when I am I will pay you well for the

knowledge of that herb—for my wife, I mean. Where do you live?"

"In Rathfillan, sir. I'm a well-known man there, and for many a long mile about it."

"You must be very useful to the country people hereabouts?"

"Ay," he exclaimed, "you mane to the poor, I suppose, and you're right; but maybe I'm of sarvice to the rich, too. Many a face I save from—I *could* save from shame, I mane—if I liked, and could get well ped for it, too. Some young, extravagant people that have rich ould fathers do be spakin' to me, too; but thin, you know, I have a sowl to be saved, and am a religious man, I hope, and do my duty as sich, and that every one that has a sowl to be saved, may! *Amin, acheernah!*"

"I am glad to find that your sense of duty preserves you against such strong temptations."

"Then, there's another set of men—these outlaws that do be robbin' rich people's houses, and they, too, try to tempt me."

"Why should *they* tempt you?"

"Bekaise the people, now knowin' that they're abroad, keep watch-dogs, bloodhounds, and sich useful animals, that give the alarm at night, and the robbers wishin', you see, to get *them* out of the way, do be temptin' me about wishin' me to pison them."

"Of course you resist them?"

"Well, I hope I do; but sometimes it's hard to get over them, especially when they plant a *skean* or a *middogue* to one's navel, and swear great oaths that they'll make a scabbard for it of my poor ould *bulg*

(belly)—I say, when the thieves do the business that way, it requires a grate dale of the grace o' God to deny them. But what's any Christhen 'idout the grace o' God? May we all have it! *Amin, acheernah!*"

"Well, when I marry, as I will soon, I'll call upon you; I dare say my wife will get jealous, for I love the ladies, if that's a fault."

Another grin was his first reply to this, after which he said:

"Well, sir, if she does, come to me."

"Where in Rathfillan do you live?"

"O, anybody will tell you; inquire for ould Sol Donnel, the yarrib man, and you'll soon find me out."

"But suppose I shouldn't wish it to be known that I called on you?"

"Eh?" said the old villain, giving him another significant grin that once more projected the fang; "well, maybe you wouldn't. If you want my sarvices, then, come to the cottage that's built agin the church-yard wall, on the north side; and if you don't wish to be seen, why you can come about midnight, when every one's asleep."

"What's this you say your name is?"

"Sol Donnel."

What do you mean by *Sol?*"

He turned up his red eyes in astonishment, and exclaimed:

"Well, now, to think that a larned man as you must be shouldn't know what Sol means! Well, the ignorance of you great people is unknown. Don't you know—but you don't—oughtn't you know, then, that Sol means Solomon, who was the wisest man and the

biggest blaggard that ever lived! Faith, if *I* had lived in his day he'd be a poor customer to me, bekaise he had no shame in him; but indeed, the doin's that goes on now in holes and corners among ourselves was no shame in his time. That's a fine bay horse you ride; would you like to have him dappled? A dappled bay, you know, is always a great beauty."

"And *could* you dapple him?"

"Ay, as sure as you ride him."

"Well, I'll think about it and let you know; there's some silver for you, and good-by, honest Solomon."

Woodward then rode on, reflecting on the novel and extraordinary character of this hypocritical old villain, in whose withered and repulsive visage he could not discover a single trace of anything that intimated the existence of sympathy with his kind. As to that, it was a *tabula rasa*, blank of all feelings except those which characterize the hyena and the fox. After he had left him, the old fellow gave a bitter and derisive look after him.

"There you go," said he, "and well I knew you, although you didn't think so. Weren't you pointed out to me the night o' the divil's bonfire, that your mother, they say, got up for you; and didn't I see you since spakin' to that skamin' blaggard, Caterine Collins, my niece, that takes many a penny out o' my hands; and didn't I know that you couldn't be talkin' to her about anything that was good. Troth, you're not your mother's son or you'll be comin' to me as well as her. Bad luck to her! she was near gettin' me into the stocks when I sowld her the dose of oak bark for the sarvants, to draw in their stomachs and shorten

their feedin'. My faith, ould Lindsay 'ud have put me in them only for fraid o' bringin' shame upon his wife." *

CHAPTER VIII.

A HEALING OF THE BREACH—A PROPOSAL FOR MARRIAGE ACCEPTED.

On that evening, when the family were assembled at supper, Mrs. Lindsay, who had had a previous consultation with her son Harry, thought proper to introduce the subject of the projected marriage between him and Alice Goodwin.

"Harry has paid a visit to these neighbors of ours," said she, "these Goodwins, and I think, now that he has come home, it would be only prudent on our part to renew the intimacy that was between us. Not that I like, or ever will like, a bone in one of their bodies; but it's only right that we should foil them at their own weapons, and try to get back the property into the hands of *one* of the family at least, if we can, and so prevent it from going to strangers. I am determined to pay them a friendly visit to-morrow."

"A friendly visit!" exclaimed her husband, with an

* Some of our readers may imagine that in the enumeration of the cures which old Sol professed to effect we have drawn too largely upon their credulity, whereas there is scarcely one of them that is not practised, or attempted, in remote and uneducated parts of Ireland, almost down to the present day. We ourselves in early youth saw a man who professed, and was believed to be able, to cure jealousy in either man or woman by a potion; whilst charms for colics, toothaches, taking motes out of the eye, and for producing love, were common among the ignorant people within our own recollection.

expression of surprise and indignation on his countenance which he could not conceal; "how can you say a friendly visit, after having just told us that you neither like them, nor ever will like them? not that it was at all necessary for you to assure us of *that.* It is, however, the hypocrisy of the thing on your part that startles and disgusts me."

"Call it prudence, if you please, Lindsay, or worldly wisdom, if you like, after all the best kind of wisdom; and I only wish you had more of it."

"That makes no difference in life," replied her husband, calmly, but severely; "as it is, you have enough, and more than enough, for the whole family."

"But has Harry any hopes of success with Alice Goodwin," asked Charles, "because everything depends on *that*?"

"If he had not, you foolish boy, do you think I would be the first to break the ice by going to pay them a visit? The girl, I dare say, will make a very good wife, or if she does not, the property will not be a pound less in value on that account: that's one comfort."

"And is it upon this hollow and treacherous principle that you are about to pay them a friendly visit?" asked her husband, with ill-repressed indignation.

"Lindsay," she replied sharply, "I perceive you are rife for a quarrel now; but I beg to tell you, sir, that I will neither seek your approbation nor regard your authority. I must manage these people after my own fashion."

"Harry," said his step-father, turning abruptly, and with incredulous surprise to him, "surely it is not

possible that you are a party to such a shameful imposture upon this excellent family?"

His brother Charles fastened his eyes upon him as if he would read his heart.

"I am sorry, sir," replied that gentleman, "that you should think it necessary to apply the word imposture to any proceeding of mine. You ought to know my mother's outspoken way, and that her heart is kinder than her language. The fact is, from the first moment I saw that beautiful girl I felt a warm interest in her, and I feel that interest increasing every day. I certainly am very anxious to secure her for her own sake, whilst I candidly admit that I am not wholly indifferent to the property. I am only a common man like others, and not above the world and its influences—who can be that lives in it? My mother, besides, will come to think better of Alice, and all of them, when she shall be enabled to call Alice daughter; won't you, mother?"

The mother, who knew by the sentiments which he had expressed to her before on this subject, that he was now playing a game with the family, did not consider it prudent to contradict him; she consequently replied,—

"I don't know, Harry; I cannot get their trick about the property out of my heart; but, perhaps, if I saw it once more where it ought to be, I *might* change That's all I can say at present."

"Well, come, Harry," said Lindsay—adverting to what he had just said—"I think you have spoken fairly enough; I do—it's candid; you are not above this world; why should you be?—come, it *is* candid."

"I trust, sir, you will never find me uncandid, either on this or any other subject."

"No; I don't think I shall, Harry. Well, be it so, —setting your mother out of the question,—proceed with equal candor in your courtship. I trust you deserve her, and, if so, I hope you may get her."

"If he does not," said Maria, "he will never get such a wife."

"By the way, Harry," asked Charles, "has she given you an intimation of anything like encouragement?"

"Well, I rather think I am not exactly a fool, Charles, nor likely to undertake an enterprise without some prospect of success. I hope you deem me, at least, a candid man."

"Yes; but there is a class of persons who frequently form too high an estimate of themselves, especially in their intercourse with women; and who very often mistake civility for encouragement."

"Very true, Charles—exceedingly just and true; but I hope I am not one of those either; my knowledge of life and the world will prevent me from that, I trust."

"I hope," continued Charles, "that if the girl is averse to such a connection she will not be harassed or annoyed about it."

"I hope, Charles, I have too much pride to press any proposal that may be disagreeable to her; I rather think I have. But have you, Charles, any reason to suppose that she should not like me?"

"Why, from what you have already hinted, Harry, you ought to be the best judge of that yourself."

"Well, I think so, too. I am not in the habit of

walking blindfold into any adventure, especially one so important as this. Trust to my address, my dear fellow," he added, with a confident smile, "and, believe me, you shall soon see her your sister-in-law."

"And I shall be delighted at it, Harry," said his sister; "so go on and prosper. If you get her you will get a treasure, setting her property out of the question."

"*Her* property!" ejaculated Mrs. Lindsay; "but no matter; we shall see. I can speak sweetly enough when I wish."

"I wish to God you would try it oftener, then," said her husband; "but I trust that during this visit of yours you will not give way to your precious temper and insult them at the outset. Don't tie a knot with your tongue that you can't unravel with your teeth. Be quiet, now; I didn't speak to raise the devil and draw on a tempest—only let us have a glass of punch, till Charley and I drink success to Harry."

The next day Mrs. Lindsay ordered the car, and proceeded to pay her intended visit to the Goodwins. She had arrived pretty near the house, when two of Goodwin's men, who were driving his cows to a grazing field on the other side of the road by which she was approaching, having noticed and recognized her, immediately turned them back and drove them into a paddock enclosed by trees, where they were completely out of her sight.

"Devil blow her, east and west!" said one of them. "What brings her across us now that we have the cattle wid us? and doesn't all the world know that she'd lave them sick and sore wid one glance of her unlucky

eye. I hope in God she didn't see them, the thief o' the devil that she is."

"She can't see them now, the cratures," replied the other; "and may the devil knock the light out of her eyes at any rate," he added, "for sure, they say it's the light of hell that's in them."

"Well, when she goes there she'll be able to see her way, and sure that'll be one comfort," replied his companion; "but in the mane time, if anything happens the cows—poor bastes—we'll know the rason of it."

"She must dale wid the devil," said the other, "and I hope she'll be burned for a witch yet; but whisht, here she comes, and may the devil roast her on his toastin' iron the first time he wants a male!"

"Troth, an' he'd find her tough feedin'," said his comrade; "and barrin' he has strong tusks, as I suppose he has, he'd find it no every-day male wid him."

As they spoke, the object of their animadversion appeared, and turned upon them, so naturally, a sinister and sharp look, that it seemed to the men as if she had suspected the subject of their conversation.

"You are Mr. Goodwin's laborers, are you not?"

"We are, ma'am," replied one of them, without, as usual, touching his hat, however.

"You ill-mannered boor," she said, "why do you not touch your hat to a lady, when she condescends to speak to you?"

"I always touch my hat to a *lady*, ma'am," replied the man sharply.

"Come here, you other man," said she; "perhaps you are not such an insolent ruffian as this? Can you tell me if Mr. and Mrs. Goodwin are at home?"

"Are you goin' there?" asked the man, making a low bow.

"Yes, I am, my good man," she replied.

"Well, then, ma'am," he added, bowing again, "you'll find that out when you go to the house;" and he made her another bow to wind up the information with all due politeness.

"Barney," said she to the servant, her face inflamed with rage, "drive on. I only wish I had those ruffianly scoundrels to deal with; I would teach them manners to their betters at all events; and you, sirra, why did you not use your whip and chastise them?"

"Faith, ma'am," replied our friend Barney Casey, "it's aisier said than done wid some of us. Why, ma'am, they're the two hardiest and *best* men in the parish; however, here's Pugshy Ruah turnin' out o' the gate, and she'll be able to tell you whether they are at home or not."

"O, that's the woman they say is unlucky," observed his mistress—"*unlucky to meet*, I mean; I have often heard of her; indeed, it may be so, for I believe there are such persons; we shall speak to her, however. My good woman," she said, addressing Pugshy, "allow me to ask, have you been at Mr. Goodwin's?"

Now Pugshy had all the legitimate characteristics of an "unlucky" woman; red-haired, had a game eye—that is to say, she squinted with one of them; Pugshy wore a caubeen hat, like a man; had on neither shoe nor stocking; her huge, brawny arms, uncovered almost to the shoulders, were brown with freckles, as was her face; so that, altogether, she would have made a bad substitute either for the Medicean Venus or the Apollo Belvidere.

"My good woman, allow me to ask if you have been at Mr. Goodwin's."

Pugshy, who knew her well, stood for a moment, and closing the eye with which she did *not* squint, kept the *game* one fixed upon her very steadily for half a minute, and as she wore the caubeen rather rakishly on one side of her head, her whole figure and expression were something between the frightful and the ludicrous.

"Was I at Misther Goodwin's, is it? Lord love you, ma'am, (and ye need it, *sotto voce*), an' maybe you'd give us a thrifle for the male's mate; it's hard times wid us this weader."

"I have no change; I never bring change out with me."

"You're goin' to Mr. Goodwin's, ma'am?"

"Yes; are he and Mrs. Goodwin at home, can you tell me?"

"They, are, ma'am, but you may as well go back again; you'll have no luck *this* day."

"Why so?"

"Why, bekaise you won't; didn't you meet *me?* Who ever has luck that meets me? Nobody ought to know that betther than yourself, for, by all accounts, you're tarred wid the same stick."

"Foolish woman," replied Mrs. Lindsay, "how is it in *your* power to prevent me?"

"No matther," replied the woman; "go an; but mark my words, you'll have your journey for nuttin', whatever it is. Indeed, if I turned back three steps wid you it might be otherwise, but you refused to cross my hand, so you must take your luck," and with a frightful glance from the eye aforesaid she passed on.

As she drove up to Mr. Goodwin's residence she was met on the steps of the hall-door by that kind-hearted gentleman and his wife, and received with a feeling of gratification which the good people could not disguise.

"I suppose," said Mrs. Lindsay, after they had got seated in the drawing-room, "that you are surprised to see *me* here?"

"We are delighted, say, Mrs. Lindsay," replied Mr. Goodwin—"delighted. Why should ill-will come between neighbors and friends without any just cause on either side? That property ——"

"O, don't talk about that," replied Mrs. Lindsay; "I didn't come to speak about it; let everything connected with it be forgotten; and as proof that I wish it should be so, I came here to-day to renew the intimacy that should subsist between us."

"And, indeed," replied Mrs. Goodwin, "the interruption of that intimacy distressed us very much—more, perhaps, Mrs. Lindsay, than you might feel disposed to give us credit for."

"Well, my dear madam," replied the other, "I am sure you will be glad to hear that I have not only my own inclination, but the sanction and wish of my whole family, in making this friendly visit, with the hope of placing us all upon our former footing. But, to tell you the truth, this might not have been so, were it not for the anxiety of my son Henry, who has returned to us, and whom, I believe, you know."

"We have that pleasure," replied Goodwin; "and from what we have seen of him, we think you have a right to feel proud of such a son."

"So I do, indeed," replied his mother; "he is a

good and most amiable young man, without either art or cunning, but truthful and honorable in the highest degree. It is to him we shall all be indebted for this reconciliation; or, perhaps, I might say," she added, with a smile, "to your own daughter Alice."

"Ah! poor Alice," exclaimed her father; "none of us felt the estrangement of the families with so much regret as she did."

"Indeed, Mrs. Lindsay," added his wife, "I can bear witness to that; many a bitter tear it occasioned the poor girl."

"I believe she is a most amiable creature," replied Mrs. Lindsay; "and I believe," she added with a smile, "that there is one particular young gentleman of that opinion as well as myself."

We believe in our souls that the simplest woman in existence, or that ever lived, becomes a deep and thorough diplomatist when engaged in a conversation that involves in the remotest degree any matrimonial speculation for a daughter. Now, Mrs. Goodwin knew as well as the reader does, that Mrs. Lindsay made allusion to her son Harry, the new-comer; but she felt that it was contrary to the spirit of such negotiations to make a direct admission of that feeling; she, accordingly, was of opinion that in order to bring Mrs. Lindsay directly to the point, and to exonerate herself and her husband from ever having entertained the question at all, her best plan was to misunderstand her, and seem to proceed upon a false scent.

"O, indeed, Mrs. Lindsay," she replied, "I am not surprised at that; Charles and Alice were always great favorites with each other."

"Charles!" exclaimed Mrs. Lindsay; "Charles! What could induce you to think of associating Charles and Alice? *He* is unworthy of such an association."

"Bless me," exclaimed Mrs. Goodwin in her turn; "why, I thought you alluded to Charles."

"No," said her neighbor, "I alluded to my eldest son, Harry, to whose good offices in this matter both families are so much indebted. *He* is worthy of any girl, and indeed few girls are worthy of him; but as for Alice, you know what a favorite she was with me, and I trust now I shall like her even better than ever."

"You are right, Mrs. Lindsay," said Goodwin, "in saying that few women are worthy of your eldest son; he is a most gentlemanly, and evidently a most acccomplished young man; his conversation at breakfast here the morning after the storm was so remarkable, both for good sense and good feeling, that I am not surprised at your friendly visit to-day, Mrs. Lindsay. He was sent, I hope, to introduce a spirit of peace and concord between us, and God forbid that we should repel it; on the contrary, we hail his mediation with delight, and feel deeply indebted to him for placing both families in their original position."

"I trust in a better position," replied his adroit mother; "I trust in a better position, Mr. Goodwin, and a still nearer and dearer connection. It is better, however, to speak out; you know me of old, my dear friends, and that I am blunt and straightforward—as the proverb has it,'I think what I say, and I say what I think.' This visit, then, is made, as I said, not only

by my own wish, but at the express entreaty of my son Harry, and the great delight of the whole family; there is therefore no use in concealing the fact—he is deeply attached to your daughter, Alice. and was from the first moment he saw her;—of course you now understand my mission—which is, in fact, to make a proposal of marriage in his name, and to entreat your favorable consideration of it, as well as your influence in his behalf with Alice herself."

"Well, I declare, Mrs. Lindsay," replied Mrs. Goodwin,(God forgive her!) "you have taken us quite by surprise—you have indeed;—dear me—I'm quite agitated; but he is, indeed, a fine young man—a perfect gentleman in his manners, and if he be as good as he looks—for marriage, God help us, tries us all ——"

"I hope it never tried you much, Martha," replied her husband, smiling.

"No, my dear, I don't say so. Still, when the happiness of one's child is concerned—and such a child as Alice ——"

"But consider, Mrs. Goodwin," replied the ambassadress, who, in fact, was not far from an explosion at what she considered a piece of contemptible vacillation on the part of her neighbor—"consider, Mrs. Goodwin," said she, "that the happiness of *my son* is concerned."

"I know it is," she replied; "but speak to her father, Mrs. Lindsay— he, as such, is the proper person—O, dear me."

"Well, Mr. Goodwin—you have heard what I have said?"

"I have, madam," said he; "but thank God I am

not so nervous as my good wife here. I like your son, Harry, very much, from what I have seen of him—and, to be plain with you, I really see no objection to such a match. On the contrary, it will promote peace and good-will between us; and, I have no doubt, will prove a happy event to the parties most concerned."

"O, there is not a doubt of it," exclaimed Mrs. Goodwin, now chiming in with her husband; "no, there can be no doubt of it. O, they will be very happy together, and that will be so delightful. My darling Alice!"—and here she became pathetic, and shed tears copiously—"yes," she added, "we will lose you, my darling, and a lonely house we will have after you, for I suppose they will live in the late Mr. Hamilton's residence, on their own property."

This allusion to the arrangements contemplated in the event of the marriage, redeemed, to a certain degree, the simple-hearted Mrs. Goodwin from the strongest possible contempt on the part of a woman who was never known to shed a tear upon any earthly subject.

"Well, then," proceeded Mrs. Lindsay, "I am to understand that this proposal on the behalf of my son is accepted?"

"So far as I and Mrs. Goodwin are concerned," replied Goodwin, "you are, indeed, Mrs. Lindsay, and so far all is smooth and easy; but, on the other hand, there is Alice—she, you know, is to be consulted."

"O! as for poor Alice," said her mother, "there will be no difficulty with her; whatever I and her father wish her to do, if it be to please us, that she will do."

"I trust," said Mrs. Lindsay, "she has no previous

attachment; for that would be unfortunate for herself, poor girl."

"She an attachment!" exclaimed her mother; "no, the poor, timid creature never thought of such a thing."

"It is difficult for parents to know that," replied Mrs. Lindsay; "but where is she?"

"She's gone out," replied her mother, "to take a pleasant jaunt somewhere with a young friend of ours, a Mr. O'Connor; but, indeed, I'm glad she is not here, for if she was, we could not, you know, discuss this matter in her presence."

"That is very true," observed Mrs. Lindsay, dryly; "but perhaps she doesn't regret her absence. As it is, I think you ought to impress upon her that, in the article of marriage, a young and inexperienced girl like her ought to have no will but that of her parents, who are best qualified, from their experience and knowledge of life, to form and direct her principles."

"I do not think," said her father, "that there is anything to be apprehended on her part. She is the most unselfish and disinterested girl that ever existed, and sooner than give her mother or me a pang, I am sure she would make any sacrifice; but at the same time," he added, "if her own happiness were involved in the matter, I should certainly accept no such sacrifice at her hands."

"As to that, Mr. Goodwin," she replied, "I hope we need calculate upon nothing on her part but a willing consent and obedience. At all events, it is but natural that they should be pretty frequently in each other's society, and that my son should have an opportunity

of inspiring her with good will towards him, if not a still warmer feeling. The matter being now understood, of course, that is and will be his exclusive privilege."

"Your observations, my dear madam, are but reasonable and natural," replied Goodwin. "Why, indeed, should it be otherwise, considering their contemplated relation to each other? Of course, we shall be delighted to see him here as often as he chooses to come, and so, I am sure, will Alice."

They then separated upon the most cordial terms; and Mrs. Lindsay, having mounted her vehicle, proceeded on her way home. She was, however, far from satisfied at the success of her interview with the Goodwins. So far as the consent of the father and mother went, all was, to be sure, quite as she could have wished it; but then, as to Alice herself, there might exist an insurmountable difficulty. She did not at all relish the fact of that young lady's taking her amusement with Mr. O'Connor, who she knew was of a handsome person and independent circumstances, and very likely to become a formidable rival to her son. As matters stood, however, she resolved to conceal her apprehensions on this point, and to urge Harry to secure, if possible, the property, which both she herself and he had solely in view. As for the girl, each of them looked upon her as a cipher in the transaction, whose only value was rated by the broad acres which they could not secure without taking her along with them.

The family were dispersed when she returned home, and she, consequently, reserved the account of her mission until she should meet them in the evening.

At length the hour came, and she lost no time in opening the matter at full length, suppressing, at the same time, her own apprehensions of Alice's consent, and her dread of the rivalry on the part of O'Connor.

"Well," said she, "I have seen these people; I have called upon them, as you all know; and, as I said, I have seen them."

"To very little purpose, I am afraid," said her husband; "I don't like your commencement of the report."

"I suppose not," she replied; "but, thank God, it is neither your liking nor disliking that we regard, Lindsay. I have seen them, Harry; and I am glad to say that they are civil people."

"Is it only now you found that out?" asked her husband; "why, they never were anything else, Jenny."

"Well, really," said she, "I shall be forced to ask you to leave the room if you proceed at this rate. Children, will you protect me from the interruption and the studied insults of this man?"

"Father," said Charles, "for Heaven's sake will you allow her to state the result of her visit? We are all very anxious to hear it; none more so than I."

"Please except your elder brother," said Harry, laughing, "whose interest you know, Charley, is most concerned."

"Well, perhaps so," said Charles; "of course, Harry —but proceed, mother, we shan't interrupt you."

"O, go on," said his mother, "go on; discuss the matter among you, I can wait; don't hesitate to interrupt me; your father there has set you that gentlemanly example."

"It must surely be good when it comes," said Harry, with a smile; "but do proceed, my dear mother, and never mind these queer folk; go on at once, and let us know all: we—that is, myself—are prepared for the worst; do proceed, mother."

"Am I at liberty to speak?" said she, and she looked at them with a glance that expressed a very fierce interrogatory. They all nodded, and she resumed:

"Well, I have seen these people, I say; I have made a proposal of marriage between Harry and Alice, and that proposal is ——"

She paused, and looked around her with an air of triumph; but whether that look communicated the triumph of success, or that of her inveterate enmity and contempt for them ever since the death of old Hamilton, was as great a secret to them as the Bononian enigma. There was a dead silence, much to her mortification, for she would have given a great deal that her husband had interrupted her just then, and taken her upon the wrong tack.

"Well," she proceeded, "do you all wish to hear it?"

Lindsay put his forefinger on his lips, and nodded to all the rest to do the same.

"Ah, Lindsay," she exclaimed, "you are an ill-minded man; but it matters not so far as *you* are concerned—in three words, Harry, the proposal *is accepted;* yes, accepted, and with gratitude and thanksgiving."

"And you had no quarrel?" said Lindsay, with astonishment; "nor you didn't let out on them? Well, well!"

"Children, I am addressing myself *to you*, and especially to Harry here, who is most interested; no, I see nothing to prevent us from having back the property and the curds-and-whey along with it."

"Faith, and the curds-and-whey are the best part of it after all," said Lindsay; "but, in the meantime, you might be a little more particular, and give us a touch of your own eloquence and ability in bringing it about."

"What did Alice herself say, mother?" asked Charles; "was she a party to the consent? because, if she was, your triumph, or rather Harry's here, is complete."

"It is complete," replied his mother, having recourse to a dishonest evasion; "the girl and her parents have but one opinion. Indeed, I always did the poor thing the credit to believe that she never was capable of entertaining an opinion of her own, and it now turns out a very fortunate thing for Harry that it is so; but of course he has made an impression upon her."

"As to that, mamma," said Maria, "I don't know —he may, or he may not; but of this I am satisfied, that Alice Goodwin is a girl who *can* form an opinion for herself, and that, whatever that opinion be, she will neither change nor abandon it upon slight grounds. I know her well, but if she has consented to marry Harry she will marry him, and that is all that is to be said about it."

"I thought she would," said Harry; "I told you, Charley, that I didn't think I was a fool—didn't I?"

"I know you did, Harry," replied his brother; "but

I don't know how—it strikes me that I would rather have any other man's opinion on that subject than your own; however, time will tell."

"It will tell, of course; and if it proves me a fool, I will give you leave to clap the fool's cap on me for life. And now that we have advanced so far and so well, I will go and take one of my evening strolls, in order to meditate on my approaching happiness." And he did so.

The family were not at all surprised at this, even although the period of his walks frequently extended into a protracted hour of the night. Not so the servants, who wondered why Master Harry should walk so much abroad and remain out so late at night, especially considering the unsettled and alarming state of the country, in consequence of the outrages and robberies which were of such frequent occurrence. This, it is true, was startling enough to these simple people; but that which filled them not only with astonishment, but with something like awe, was the indifference with which he was known to traverse haunted places alone and unaccompanied, when the whole country around, except thieves and robbers, witches, and evil spirits, were sound asleep. "What," they asked each other, "could he mean by it?"

"Barney Casey, you that knows a great deal for an unlarned man, tell us what you think of it," said the cook; "isn't it the world's wondher, that a man that's out at such hours doesn't *see somethin'*? There's Lanty Bawn, and sure they say he saw the *white woman* beyant the end of the long *boreen* on Thursday night last, the Lord save us; eh, Barney?"

Barney immediately assumed the oracle.

"He did," said he; "and what is still more fearful, it's said there was a *black man* along wid her. They say that Lanty seen them both, and that the black man had his arm about the white woman's waist, and was kissin' her at full trot."

The cook crossed herself, and the whole kitchen turned up its eyes at this diabolical piece of courtship.

"Musha, the Lord be about us in the manetime; but bad luck to the ould boy, (a *black man* is always considered the devil, or the *ould boy*, as they call him,) wasn't it a daisant taste he had, to go to kiss a ghost?"

"Why," replied Barney with a grin, "I suppose the ould chap is hard set on that point; who the devil else would kiss him, barrin' some she ghost or other? Some luckless ould maid, I'll go bail, that *gother* a beard while she was here, and the devil now is kissin' it off to get seein' what kind of a face she has. Well, all I can say," he proceeded, "is, that I wish him luck of his employment, for in troth it's an honorable one and he has a right to be proud of it."

"Well, well," said the housemaid, "it's a wondher how any one can walk by themselves at night; wasn't it near the well at the foot of the long hill that goes up to where the Davorens live that they were seen?"

"It was," replied Barney; "at laste, they say so."

"And didn't yourself tell me," she proceeded, "that that same lonesome *boreen* is a common walk at night wid Master Harry?"

"And so it is, Nanse," replied Barney; "but as for Misther Harry, I believe it's purty well known, that by night or by day he may walk where he likes."

"Father of heaven!" they exclaimed in a low, earnest voice; "but *why*, Barney?" they asked in a condensed whisper.

"Why! Why is he called *Harry na Suil Balor* for? Can you tell me that?"

"Why, bekaise his two eyes isn't one color."

"And why arn't they one color? Can you tell me *that?*"

"O, the sorra step farther I can go in that question."

"No," said Barney, full of importance, "I thought not, and what is more, I didn't expect it from you. His mother could tell, though. It's in her family, and there's worse than that in her family."

"Troth, by all accounts," observed the girl, "there never was anything good in her family. But, Barney, achora, will you tell us, if you know, what's the rason of it?"

"If I know?" said Barney, rather offended; "maybe I don't know, and maybe I do, if it came to that. Any body, then, that has two eyes of different colors always has the Evil Eye, or the *Suil Balor*, and has the power of *overlookin';* and, between ourselves, Masther Harry has it. The misthress herself can only overlook *cattle*, bekaise both her eyes is of the one color; but Masther Harry could overlook either man or woman if he wished. And how do you think that comes?"

"The Lord knows," replied the cook, crossing herself; "from no good, at any rate. Troth, I'll get a gospel and a scapular, for, to tell you the truth, I observed that Masther Harry gave me a look the other

day that made my flesh creep, by rason that he thought the mutton was overdone."

"O, *you* needn't be afeard," replied Barney; "he can overlook or not, as he plaises; if he does not wish to do so, you're safe enough; but when any one like him that has the power wishes to do it, they could wither you by degrees off o' the airth."

"God be about us! But, Barney, you didn't tell us how it comes, for all that."

"It comes from the fairies. Doesn't every one know that the fairies themselves has the power of overlookin' both cattle and Christians?"

"That's true enough," she replied; "every one, indeed, knows that. Sure, my aunt had a child that died o' the fairies."

"Yes, but Masther Harry can see them."

"What! is it the fairies?"

"Ay, the fairies, but only wid one eye, that piercin' black one of his. No, no; as I said before, he may walk where he likes, both by night and by day; he's safe from everything of the kind; even a ghost daren't lay a finger on him; and as the devil and the fairies are connected, he's safe from *him*, too, in this world at laste; but the Lord pity him when he goes to the next; for there he'll suffer *lalty*."

The truth is, that in those days of witchcraft and apparitions of all kinds, and even in the present, among the ignorant and uneducated of the lower classes, any female seen at night in a lonely place, and supposed to be a spirit, was termed *a white woman*, no matter what the color of her dress may have been, provided it was not black. The same superstition held

good when anything in the shape of a man happened to appear under similar circumstances. Terror, and the force of an excited imagination, instantly transformed it into a *black man*, and that black man, of course, was the devil himself. In the case before us, however, our readers, we have no doubt, can give a better guess at the nature of the black man and white woman in question than either the cook, the housemaid, or even Barney himself.

It was late that night when Harry came in. The servants, with whose terrors and superstitions Casey had taken such liberties, now looked upon him as something awful, and, as might be naturally expected, felt a dreadful curiosity with respect to him and his movements. They lay awake on the night in question, with the express purpose of satisfying themselves as to the hour of his return, and as that was between twelve and one, they laid it down as a certain fact that there was something "not right," and beyond the common in his remaining out so late.

CHAPTER IX.

CHASE OF THE WHITE HARE.

"Hark, forward, forward; holla ho!"

THE next morning our friend Harry appeared at the breakfast table rather paler than usual, and in one of his most abstracted moods; for it may be said here that the frequent occurrence of such moods had not escaped the observation of his family, especially of his step-father, in whose good grace, it so happened, that he was not improving. One cause of this was his supercilious, or, rather, his contemptuous manner towards his admirable and affectionate brother. He refused to associate with him in his sports or diversions; refused him his confidence, and seldom addressed him, except in that tone of banter which always implies an offensive impression of inferiority and want of respect towards the object of it. After breakfast the next morning his father said to Charles, when the other members of the family had all left the room,—

"Charley, there is something behind that gloom of Harry's which I don't like. Indeed, altogether he has not improved upon me since his return, and you are aware that I knew nothing of him before. I cannot conceive his object in returning home just now, and, it seems, with no intention of going back. His uncle was the kindest of men to him, and intended to pro-

vide for him handsomely. It is not for nothing he would leave such an uncle, and it is not for nothing that such an uncle would part with him, unless there was a screw loose somewhere. I don't wish to press him into an explanation; but he has not offered any, and refuses, of course, to place any confidence in me."

"My dear father," replied his generous brother, "I fear you judge him too harshly. As for these fits of gloom, they may be constitutional; you know my mother has them, and won't speak to one of us sometimes for whole days together. It *is* possible that some quarrel or misunderstanding may have taken place between him and his uncle; but how do you know that his silence on the subject does not proceed from delicacy towards that relative?"

"Well, it may be so; and it is a very kind and generous interpretation which you give of it, Charley. Let that part of the subject pass, then; but, again, regarding this marriage. The principle upon which he and his mother are proceeding is selfish, heartless, and perfidious in the highest degree; and d—— me if I think it would be honorable in me to stand by and see such a villanous game played against so excellent a family—against so lovely and so admirable a girl as Alice Goodwin. It is a union between the kite and the dove, Charley, and it would be base and cowardly in me to see such a union accomplished."

"Father," said Charles, "in *this* matter will you be guided by me? If Alice herself is a consenting party to the match, you have, in my opinion, no right to interfere, at least with *her* affections. If she marries him without stress or compulsion, she does it deliber-

ately, and she shapes her own course and her own fate. In the meantime I advise you to hold back for the present, and wait until her own sentiments are distinctly understood. That can be effected by a private interview with yourself, which you can easily obtain. Let us not be severe on Harry. I rather think he is pressed forward in the matter by my mother, for the sake of the property. If his uncle has discarded him, it is not, surely, unreasonable that a young man like him, without a profession or any fixed purpose in life, should wish to secure a wife—and *such* a wife—who will bring back to him the very property which was originally destined for himself in the first instance. Wait, then, at all events, until Alice's conduct in the matter is known. If there be unjustifiable force and pressure upon her, *act;* if not, I think, sir, that, with every respect, your interference would be an unjustifiable intrusion."

"Very well, Charley; I believe you are right; I will be guided by you for the present; I won't interfere; but in the meantime I shall have an eye to their proceedings. I don't think the Goodwins at all mercenary or selfish, but it is quite possible that they may look upon Harry as the heir of his uncle's wealth; and, after all, Charley, nature is nature; *that* may influence them even unconsciously, and yet I am not in a condition to undeceive them."

"Father," said Charles, "all I would suggest is, as I said before, a little patience for the present; wait a while until we learn how Alice herself will act. I am sorry to say that I perceived what I believe to be an equivocation on the part of my mother in her allusion

to Alice. I think it will be found by and by that her personal consent has not been given; and, what is more, that she was not present at all during their conversation on the subject. If she was, however, and became a consenting party to the proposal, then I say now, as I said before, you have no right to interfere in the business."

"What keeps him out so late at night? I mean occasionally. He is out two or three nights every week until twelve or one o'clock. Now, you know, in the present state of the country, that is not safe. *Shawna-Middogue* and such scoundrels are abroad, and they might put a bullet through him some night or other."

"He is not at all afraid on that score," replied Charles; "he never goes out in the evening without a case of pistols freshly loaded."

"Well, but it is wrong to subject himself to danger. Where is he gone now?"

"He and Barney Casey have gone out to course; I think they went up towards the mountains."

Such was the fact. Harry was quite enamoured of sport, and, finding dogs, guns, and fishing rods ready to his hand, he became a regular sportsman—a pursuit in which he found Barney a very able and intelligent assistant, inasmuch as he knew the country, and every spot where game of every description was to be had. They had traversed a considerable portion of rough mountain land, and killed two or three hares, when the heat of the day became so excessive that they considered it time to rest and take refreshments.

"The sun, Masther Harry, is d—— hot," said Barney; "and now that ould Bet Harramount hasn't been

in it for many a long year, we may as well go to that dissolate cabin there above, and shelter ourselves from the hate—not that I'd undhertake to go there by myself; but now that you are wid me I don't care if I take a peep into the inside of it, out of curiosity."

"Why," said Woodward, "what about that cabin?"

"I'll tell you that, sir, when we get into it. It's consarnin' coorsin', too; but nobody ever lived in it since *she* left it."

"Since who left it?"

"Never mind, sir; I'll tell you all about it by andby."

It was certainly a most desolate and miserable hut, and had such an air of loneliness and desertion about it as was calculated to awaken reflections every whit as deep and melancholy as the contemplation of a very palace in ruins, especially to those who, like Barney, knew the history of its last inhabitant. It was far up in the mountains, and not within miles of another human habitation. Its loneliness and desolation alone would not have made it so peculiarly striking and impressive had it been inhabited; but its want of smoke — its still and lifeless appearance — the silence and the solitude around it — the absence of all symptoms of human life — its significant aspect of destitution and poverty, even at the best — all contributed to awaken in the mind that dreamy reflection that would induce the spectator to think that, apart from the strife and bustle of life, it might have existed there for a thousand years. Humble and contemptible in appearance as it was, yet there, as it stood — smokeless, alone, and desolate, as we have said, with no exponent of existence about it — no bird singing, no animal moving, as a token of

contiguous life, no tree waving in the breeze, no shrub, even, stirring, but all still as the grave — there, we say, as it stood, afar and apart from the general uproar of the world, and apparently gray with long antiquity, it was a solemn and a melancholy homily upon human life in all its aspects, from the cabin to the palace, and from the palace to the grave. Now, its position and appearance might suggest to a thinking and romantic mind all the reflections to which we have alluded, without any additional accessories; but when the reader is informed that it was supposed to be the abode of crime, the rendezvous of evil spirits, the theatre of unholy incantations, and the temporary abode of the Great Tempter — and when all these facts are taken in connection with its desolate character, he will surely admit that it was calculated to impress the mind of all those who knew the history of its antecedents with awe and dread.

"I have never been in it," said Barney, "and I don't think there's a man or woman in the three next parishes that would enter it alone, even by daylight; but now that you are wid me, I have a terrible curiosity to see it inside."

A curse was thought to hang over it, but that curse, as it happened, was its preservation in the undilapidated state in which it stood.

On entering it, which Barney did not do without previously crossing himself, they were surprised to find it precisely in the same situation in which it had been abandoned. There were one small pot, two stools, an earthen pitcher, a few wooden trenchers lying upon a shelf, an old dusty salt-bag, an ash stick, broken in the

middle, and doubled down so as to form a tongs; and gathered up in a corner was a truss of straw, covered with a rug and a thin old blanket, which had constituted a wretched substitute for a bed. That, however, which alarmed Barney most, was an old broomstick with a stump of worn broom attached to the end of it, as it stood in an opposite corner. This constituted the whole furniture of the hut.

"Now, Barney," said Harry, after they had examined it, "out with the brandy and water and the slices of ham, till we refresh ourselves in the first place, and after that I will hear your history of this magnificent mansion."

"O, it isn't the mansion, sir," he replied, "but the woman that lived in it that I have to spake about. God guard us! There in that corner is the very broomstick she used to ride through the air upon!"

"Never mind that now, but ransack that immense shooting-pocket and produce its contents."

They accordingly sat down, each upon one of the stools, and helped themselves to bread and ham, together with some tolerably copious draughts of brandy and water which they had mixed before leaving home. Woodward, perceiving Barney's anxiety to deliver himself of his narrative, made him take an additional draught by way of encouragement to proceed, which, having very willingly finished the bumper offered him, he did as follows:

"Well, Masther Harry, in the first place, do you believe in the Bible?"

"In the Bible! — ahem — why — yes — certainly, Barney; do you suppose I'm not a Christian?"

"God forbid," replied Barney; "well, the Bible itself isn't thruer than what I'm goin' to tell you—sure all the world for ten miles round knows it."

"Well, but, Barney, I would rather you would let *me* know it in the first place."

"So I will, sir. Well, then, there was a witch-woman, by name one Bet Harramount, and on the surface of God's earth, blessed be his name! there was nothin' undher a bonnet and petticoats so ugly. She was pitted wid the small-pox to that degree that you might hide half a peck of marrowfat paise (peas) in her face widout their being noticed; then the sames (seams) that ran across it were five-foot raspers, every one of them. She had one of the purtiest gooseberry eyes in Europe; and only for the squint in the other, it would have been the ornament of her comely face entirely; but as it was, no human bein' was ever able to decide between them. She had two buck teeth in the front of her mouth that nobody could help admirin'; and, indeed, altogether I don't wondher that the devil fell in consate wid her, for, by all accounts, they say he carries a sweet tooth himself for comely ould women like Bet Harramount. Give the tasty ould chap a wrinkle any day before a dimple, when he promotes them to be witches, as he did her. Sure he was seen kissin' a ghost the other night near Crukanesker well, where the Davorens get their wather from. O, thin, bedad, but Grace Davoren is a beauty all out; and maybe 'tis herself doesn't know it."

"Go on with your story," said Woodward, rather dryly; "proceed."

"Well, sir, there is Bet Harramount's face for you,

and the rest of her figure wasn't sich as to disgrace it. She was half bent wid age, wore an ould black bonnet, an ould red cloak, and walked wid a staff that was bent at the top, as it seems every witch must do. Where she came from nobody could ever tell, for she was a black stranger in this part of the country. At all events, she lived in the town below, but *how* she lived nobody could tell either. Everything about her was a riddle; no wondher, considherin' she hardly was ever known to spake to any one, from the lark to the lamb. At lenth she began to be suspected by many sensible people to be something *not right*; which you know, sir, was only natural. Peter O'Figgins, that was cracked,—but then it was only wid dhrink and larnin'—said it; and Katty McTrollop, Lord Bilberry's henwife, was of the same opinion, and from them and others the thing grew and spread until it became right well known that she was nothin' else than a witch, and that the big wart on her neck was nothin' more nor less than the mark the devil had set upon her, to suckle his babies by. From this out, them that had Christian hearts and loved their religion trated the thief as she desarved to be trated. She was hissed and hooted, thank God, wherever she showed her face; but still nobody had courage to lay a hand upon her by rason of her blasphaimin' and cursin', which, they say, used to make the hair stand like wattles upon the heads of them that heard her."

"Had she not a black cat?" asked Woodward; "surely, she ought to have had a familiar."

"No," replied Barney; "the cat she had was a white cat, and the manin' of its color will appear to you by

and by; at any rate, out came the truth. You have heard of the Black Spectre—the *Shan-dhinne-dhuv?*"

"I have," replied the other; "proceed."

"Well, sir, as I said, the truth came out at last; in the coorse of a short time she was watched at night, and seen goin' to the haunted house, where the Spectre lives."

"Did she walk there, or fly upon her broomstick?" asked Woodward, gravely.

"I believe she walked, sir," replied Barney; "but afther that every eye was upon her, and many a time she was seen goin' to the haunted house when she thought *no* eye was upon her. Afther this, of coorse, she disappeared, for, to tell you the truth, the town became too hot for her; and, indeed, this is not surprisin'. Two or three of the neighborin' women miscarried, and several people lost their cattle after she came to the town; and to make a long story short, just as it was made up to throw her into the parson's pond, she disappeared, as I said, exactly as if she had known their intention: and becoorse she did."

"And did they ever find out where she went to?"

"Have patience, sir, for patience, they say, is a virtue. About a month afterwards some of the townspeople came up to the mountains here, to hunt hares, just as we did. Several of them before this had seen a white hare near the very spot we're sittin' in, but sorra dog of any description, either hound, greyhound, or lurcher could blow wind in her tail; even a pair of the Irish blood-hounds were brought, and when they came on her, she flew from them like the wind, and laughed at them, becoorse. Well, sir, the whole coun-

try was in a terrible state of alarm about the white hare, for every one knew, of coorse, that she was a witch; and as the cows began, here and there, to fail in their milk, why, it was a clear case that she sucked them in ordher to supply some imp of the devil that sucked herself. At that time there was a priest in this parish, a very pious man, by name Father McFeen; and as he liked, now and then, to have a dish of hare soup, he kept a famous greyhound, called Koolawn, that was never said to miss a hare by any chance. As I said, some of the townspeople came up here to have a hunt, and as they wished, above all things, to bring the priest's greyhound and the white hare together, they asked the loan of him from his reverence, telling him, at the same time, what they wanted him for. Father McFeen was very proud of his dog, and good right he had, and tould them they should have him with pleasure.

"'But, as he's goin' to try his speed against a witch,' said he, 'I'll venture to say that you'll have as pretty a run as ever was seen on the hills.'

"Well, sir, at all events, off they set to the mountains; and sure enough, they weren't long there when they had the best of sport, but no white hare came in their way. Koolawn, however, was kept in the slip the whole day, in the hope of their startin' her, for they didn't wish to have him tired if they should come across her. At last, it was gettin' late, and when they were just on the point of givin' her up, and goin' home, begad she started, and before you'd say Jack Robison, Koolawn and she were at it. Sich a chase, they say, was never seen. They flew at sich a rate that the

people could hardly keep their eyes upon them. The hare went like the wind; but, begad, it was not every evening she had sich a dog as famous Koolawn at her scut. He turned her, and turned her, and every one thought he had her above a dozen of times, but still she turned, and was off from him again. At this rate they went on for long enough, until both began to fail, and to appear nearly run down. At length the gallant Koolawn had her; she gave a squeal that was heard, they say, for miles. He had her, I say, hard and fast by the hip, but it was only for a moment; how she escaped from him nobody knows; but it was thought that he wasn't able, from want of breath, to keep his hoult. To make a long story short, she got off from him, turned up towards the cabin we're sittin' in, Koolawn, game as ever, still close to her; at last she got in, and as the dog was about to spring in afther her, he found the door shut in his face. There now was the proof of it; but wait till you hear what's comin'. The men all ran up here and opened the door, for there was only a latch upon it, and if the hare was in existence, surely they'd find her now. Well, they closed the door at wanst for fraid she'd escape them; but afther sarchin' to no purpose, what do you think they found? No hare, at any rate, but ould Bet Harramount pantin' in the straw there, and covered wid a rug, for she had'nt time to get on the blanket—just as if the life was lavin' her. The sweat, savin' your presence, was pourin' from her; and upon examinin' her more closely, which they did, they found the marks of the dog's teeth in one of her ould hips, which was freshly bleedin'. They were now satisfied, I think, and——"

"But why did they not seize and carry her before a magistrate?"

"Aisy, Masther Harry; the white cat, all this time, was sittin' at the fireside there, lookin' on very quietly, when the thought struck the men that they'd set the dogs upon it, and so they did, or rather, so they tried to do, but the minute the cat was pointed out to them, they dropped their ears and tails, and made out o' the house, and all the art o' man couldn't get them to come in again. When the men looked at it agin it was four times the size it had been at the beginnin', and, what was still more frightful, it was gettin' bigger and bigger, and fiercer and fiercer lookin', every minute. Begad, the men seein' this took to their heels for the present, wid an intention of comin' the next mornin', wid the priest and the magisthrate, and a strong force to seize upon her, and have her tried and convicted, in ordher that she might be burned."

"And did they come?"

"They did; but of all the storms that ever fell from the heavens, none o' them could aquil the one that come on that night. Thundher, and wind, and lightnin', and hail, and rain, were all at work together, and every one knew at wanst that the devil was *riz* for somethin'. Well, I'm near the end of it. The next mornin' the priest and the magisthrate, and a large body of people from all quarthers, came to make a prisoner of her; but, indeed, wherever she might be herself, they didn't expect to find this light, flimsy hut standin', nor stick nor stone of it together afther such a storm. What was their surprise, then, to see wid their own eyes that not a straw on the roof of it was disturbed any more than if it had been the calmest night that ever came on the earth?"

"But about the witch herself?"

"She was gone; neither hilt nor hair of her was there; nor from that day to this was she ever seen by mortal. It's not hard to guess, however, what became of her. Every one knows that the devil carried her and her imp off in the tempest, either to some safer place, or else to give her a warm corner below stairs."

"Why, Barney, it must be an awful little house, this."

"You may say that, sir; there's not a man, woman, or child in the barony would come into it by themselves. Every one keeps from it; the very rapparees, and robbers of every description, would take the shelther of a cleft or cave rather than come into it. Here it is, then, as you see, just as she and the devil and his imp left it; no one has laid a hand on it since, nor ever will."

"But why was it not pulled down and levelled at the time?"

"Why, Masther Harry? Dear me, I wondher you ask that. Do you think the people would be mad enough to bring down her vengeance upon themselves or their property, or maybe upon both? and for that matther she may be alive yet."

"Well, then, if she is," replied Woodward, "here goes to set her at defiance;" and as he spoke he tossed bed, straw, rug, blanket, and every miserable article of furniture that the house contained, out at the door.

Barney's hair stood erect upon his head, and he looked aghast.

"Well, Masther Harry," said he, "I'm but a poor man, and I wouldn't take the wealth of the parish and

do that. Come away, sir; let us lave it; as I tould you, they say there's a curse upon it, and upon every one that makes or meddles wid it. Some people say it's to stand there till the day of judgment."

Having now refreshed themselves, they left Bet Harramount's cabin, with all its awful associations, behind them, and resumed their sport, which they continued until evening, when, having killed as many hares as they could readily carry, they took a short cut home through the lower fields. By this way they came upon a long, green hill, covered in some places with short furze, and commanding a full view of the haunted house, which lay some four or five hundred yards below them, with its back door lying, as usual, open.

"Let us beat these furze," said Woodward, "and have one run more, if we can, before getting home; it is just the place for a hare."

"With all my heart," replied Barney; "another will complete the half dozen."

They accordingly commenced searching the cover, which they did to no purpose, and were upon the point of giving up all hope of success, when, from the centre of a low, broad clump of furze, out starts a hare, as white almost as snow. Barney for a moment was struck dumb; but at length exerting his voice, for he was some distance from Woodward, he shouted out,—

"O, for goodness' sake, hould in the dogs, Masther Harry!"

It was too late, however; the gallant animals, though fatigued by their previous exertions, immediately gave

noble chase, and by far the most beautiful and interesting course they had had that day took place upon the broad, clear plain that stretched before them. It was, indeed, to the eye of a sportsman, one of intense and surpassing interest—an interest which, even to Woodward, who only laughed at Barney's story of the witch, was, nevertheless, deepened tenfold by the coincidence between the two circumstances. The swift and mettlesome dogs pushed her hard, and succeeded in turning her several times, when it was observed that she made a point to manage her running so as to approximate to the haunted house—a fact which was not unobserved by Barney, who now, having joined Woodward, exclaimed,—

"Mark it, Masther Harry, mark my words, she's alive still, and will be wid the *Shan-dhinne-dhuv* in spite o' them! Bravo, Sambo! Well done, Snail; ay, Snail, indeed—hillo! by the sweets o' rosin they have her—no, no—but it was a beautiful turn, though; and poor Snail, so tired afther his day's work. Now, Masther Harry, thunder and turf! how beautiful Sambo takes her up. Bravo, Sambo! stretch out, my darlin' that you are!—O, blood, Masther Harry, isn't that beautiful? See how they go neck and neck wid their two noses not six inches from her scut; and dang my buttons but, witch or no witch, she's a thorough bit o' game, too. Come, Bet, don't be asleep, my ould lady; move along, my darlin'—do you feel the breath of your sweetheart at your bottom? Take to your broomstick; you want it."

As he uttered these words the hare turned,—indeed it was time for her,—and both dogs shot forward, by

the impetus of their flight, so far beyond the point of her turn, that she started off towards the haunted house. She had little time to spare, however, for they were once more gaining on her; but still she approached the house, the dogs nearing her fast. She approached the house, we say; she entered the open door, the dogs within a few yards of her, when, almost in an instant, they came to a standstill, looked into it, but did not enter; and when whistled back to where Woodward and Barney stood, they looked in Barney's eye, not only panting and exhausted, as indeed they were, but terrified also.

"Well, Masther Harry," said he, assuming the air of a man who spoke with authority, "what do you think of *that?*"

"I think you are right," replied Woodward; assuming on his part, for reasons which will be subsequently understood, an impression of sudden conviction. "I think you are right, Barney, and that the Black Spectre and the witch are acquaintances."

"Try her wid a silver bullet," said Barney; "there is nothing else for it. No *dog* can kill her—that's a clear case; but souple as she is, a silver bullet is the only messenger that can overtake her. Bad luck to her, the thief! sure, if she'd turn to God and repint, it isn't codgerin' wid sich company she'd be, and often in danger, besides, of havin' a greyhound's nose at her flank. I hope you're satisfied, Masther Harry?"

"Perfectly, Barney; there can be no doubt about it now. As for my part, I know not what temptation could induce me to enter that haunted house. I see that I was on dangerous ground when I defied the

witch in the hut; but I shall take care to be more cautious in future."

They then bent their steps homewards, each sufficiently fatigued and exhausted after the sports of the day to require both food and rest. Woodward went early to bed, but Barney, who was better accustomed to exercise, having dined heartily in the kitchen, could not, for the soul of him, contain within his own bosom the awful and supernatural adventure which had just occurred. He assumed, as before, a very solemn and oracular air; spoke little, however, but that little was deeply abstracted and mysterious. It was evident to the whole kitchen that he was brimful of something, and that that something was of more than ordinary importance.

"Well, Barney, had you and Masther Harry a pleasant day's sport? I see you have brought home five hares," said the cook.

"Hum!" groaned Barney; "but no matther; it's a quare world, Mrs. Malony, and there's strange things in it. Heaven bless me! Heaven bless me, and heaven bless us all, if it comes to that! Masther Harry said he'd send me down a couple o' glasses of—— O, here comes Biddy wid them; that's a girl, Bid—divil sich a kitchen-maid in Europe!"

Biddy handed him a decanter with about half a pint of stout whiskey in it, a portion of which passed into a goblet, was diluted with water, and drunk off, after which he smacked his lips, but with a melancholy air, and then, looking solemnly and meditatively into the fire, relapsed into silence.

"Did you meet any fairies on your way?" asked

Nanse, the housemaid. For about half a minute Barney did not reply; but at length, looking about him, he started, —

"Eh? What's that? Who spoke to me?"

"Who spoke to you?" replied Nanse. "Why, I think you're beside yoursel—I did."

"What did you say, Nanse? *I am* beside myself."

There was now a sudden cessation in all the culinary operations, a general pause, and a rapid congregating around Barney, who still sat looking solemnly into the fire.

"Why, Barney, there's something strange over you," said the cook. "Heaven help the poor boy; sure, it's a shame to be tormentin' him this way; but in the name of goodness, Barney, and as you have a sowl to be saved, will you tell us all? Stand back, Nanse, and don't be torturin' the poor lad this way, as I said."

"Biddy," said Barney, his mind still wandering, and his eyes still fixed on the fire—"Biddy, darlin', will you hand me that decanther agin; I find I'm not aquil to it. Heaven presarve us! Heaven presarve us!—that's it; now hand me the wather, like an angel *out of* heaven as you are, Bid. Ah, glory be to goodness, but that's refreshin', especially afther sich a day—*sich* a day! O saints above, look down upon us poor sinners, one and all, men and women, wid pity and compassion this night! Here; I'm very wake; let me get to bed; is there any pump wather in the kitchen?"

To describe the pitch to which he had them wound up would be utterly impossible. He sat in the cook's

arm-chair, leaning a little back, his feet placed upon the fender, and his eyes, as before, immovably, painfully, and abstractedly fixed upon the embers. He was now the centre of a circle, for they were all crowded about him, wrapped up to the highest possible pitch of curiosity.

"We were talkin' about Masther Harry," said he, "the other night, and I think I tould you somethin' about him; it's like a dhrame to me that I did."

"You did, indeed, Barney," said the cook, coaxingly, "and I hope that what you tould us wasn't true."

"Ay, but about to-day, Barney; somethin' has happened to-day that's troublin' you."

"Who is it said that?" said he, his eyes now closed, as if he were wrapped up in some distressing mystery. "Was it you, Nanse? It's like your voice, achora."

Now, the reader must know that a deadly jealousy lay between Nanse and the cook, *quoad* honest Barney, who, being aware of the fact, kept the hopes and fears of each in such an exact state of equilibrium, that neither of them could, for the life of her, claim the slightest advantage over the other. The droll varlet had an appetite like a shark, and a strong relish for drink besides, and what between precious tidbits from the cook and borrowing small sums for liquor from Nanse, he contrived to play them off one against the other with great tact.

"I think," said he, his eyes still closed, "that that is Nanse's voice; is it, acushla?"

"It is, Barney, achora," replied Nanse; "but there's something wrong wid you."

"I wish to goodness, Nanse, you'd let the boy alone," said the cook; "when he chooses to spake, he'll spake to them that can undherstand him."

"O, jaminy stars! that's you, I suppose; ha, ha, ha."

"Keep silence," said Barney, "and listen. Nanse, you are right in one sinse, and the cook's right in another; you're both right, but at the present spakin' you're both wrong. Listen—you all know the *Shandhinne-dhuv?*"

"Know him! The Lord stand between us and him," replied Nanse; "I hope in God we'll never either know or see him."

"You know," proceeded Barney, "that he keeps the haunted house, and appears in the neighborhood of it?"

"Yes, we know that, achora," replied the cook, sweetly.

"Well, you can't forget Bet Harramount, the witch, that lived for some time in Rathfillan? She that was hunted in the shape of a white hare by pious Father McFeen's famous greyhound, *Koolawn.*"

"Doesn't all the world know it, Barney, avillish?" said Nanse.

"Divil the word she'll let out o' the poor boy's lips," said the cook, with a fair portion of venom. Nanse made no reply, but laughed with a certain description of confidence, as she glanced sneeringly at the cook, who, to say the truth, turned her eyes with a fiery and impulsive look towards the ladle.

"Well," proceeded Barney, "you all know that the divil took her and her imp, the white cat, away on the night of the great storm that took place then?"

"We do! Sure we have heard it a thousand times."

"Very well—I want to show you that Bet Harramount, the white witch, and the *Black Specthre* are sweethearts, and are leadin' a bad life together."

"Heavenly Father! Saints above! Blessed Mother!" were ejaculated by the whole kitchen. Barney, in fact, was progressing with great effect.

"O, yez needn't be surprised," he continued, "for it was well known that they had many private meetin's while Bet was livin' in Rathfillan. But it was thought the divil had taken her away from the priest and magisthrate on the night o' the storm, and so he did; and he best knew why. Listen, I say—Masther Harry and I went out this day to coorse hares; we went far up into the mountains, and never pulled bridle till we came to the cabin where the witch lived, the same that *Koolawn* chased her into in the shape of a white hare, after taking a bite out of her, — out of the part next her scut. Well, we sat down in the cursed cabin, much against *my* wishes, but *he* would rest nowhere else—*mark* that—so while we were helpin' ourselves to the ham and brandy, I up and tould him the history of Bet Harramount from *a* to *izzard*. 'Well,' said he, 'to show you how little *I* care about her, and that *I* set her at defiance, I'll toss every atom of her beggarly furniture out of the door;' and so he did—but by dad I thought he done it in a jokin' way, as much as to say, *I* can take a liberty where another can't. I knew, becoorse, he was wrong; but that makes no maxim—I'll go on wid my story. On our way home we came to the green fields that lie on this side of the haunted house; a portion of it, on a risin' ground, is covered

with furze. Now listen—when we came to it he stood; 'Barney,' says he, 'there's a hare here; give me the dogs, Sambo and Snail; they'll have sich a hunt as they never had yet, and never will have agin.'

"He then closed his eyes, raised his left foot, and dhrew it back three times in the divil's name, pronounced some words that I could't understand, and then said to me, 'Now, Barney, go down to that withered furze, and as you go, always keep your left foot foremost; cough three times, then kick the furze with your left foot, and maybe you'll see an ould friend o' yours.'

"Well, I did so, and troth I thought there was somethin' over me when I did it; but—what 'ud you think?—out starts *a white hare*, and off went Sambo and Snail afther her, full butt. I have seen many a hard run, but the likes o' that I never seen. If they turned her wanst they turned her more than a dozen times; but where do you think she escaped to at last?"

"The Lord knows, Barney; where?"

"As heaven's above us, into the haunted house; and if the dogs were to get a thousand guineas apiece, one of them couldn't be forced into it afther her. They ran with their noses on her very scut, widin five or six yards of it, and when she went into it they stood stock still, and neither man nor sword could get them to go farther. But what do you think Masther Harry said afther he had seen all this? 'Barney,' said he, 'I'm detarmined to spend a night in the haunted house before I'm much ouldher; only keep that to yourself, and don't make a blowin' horn of it through the parish.'

And what he said to me I say to you—never breathe a syllable of it to man or mortal. It'll be worse for you if you do. And now, do you remember what Lanty Malony saw the other night? The black man kissin' the white woman. Is it clear to yez now? The *Shan-dhinne-dhuv*—the *Black Specthre*—kissin' Bet Harramount, the white woman. There it is; and now you have it as clear as a, b, c."

Barney then retired to his bed, leaving the denizens of the kitchen in a state which the reader may very well understand.

CHAPTER X.

TRUE LOVE DEFEATED.

Mr. and Mrs. Goodwin, in the absence of their daughter, held a very agreeable conversation on the subject of Mrs. Lindsay's visit. Neither Goodwin nor his wife was in the slightest degree selfish, yet, somehow, there crept into their hearts a certain portion of selfishness, which could be traced only to the affection which they felt for Alice. They calculated that Henry Woodward, having been reared and educated by his uncle, would be amply provided for by that wealthy gentleman—who, besides, was childless. This consideration became a strong element in their deliberations and discussions upon the projected match, and they accordingly resolved to win over Alice's consent to it as soon as possible. From the obedience of her disposition, and the natural pliancy of her character with the opinions of others, they concluded the matter as

arranged and certain. They forgot, however, that Alice, though a feeble thinker on matters of superstition and others of a minor importance, could sometimes exercise a will of her own, but very seldom, if ever, when opposed to theirs. They knew her love and affection for them, and that she was capable of making any sacrifice that might contribute to their happiness. They had, however, observed of late—indeed for a considerable time past—that she appeared to be in low spirits, and moved about as if there was a pressure of some description on her mind; and when they asked her if she were at ease—which they often did—she only replied by a smile, and asked them in return why she should be otherwise. With this reply they were satisfied, for they knew that upon the general occurrences of life she was almost a mere child, and that, although her health was good, her constitution was naturally delicate, and liable to be affected by many things indifferent in themselves, which girls of a stronger mind and constitution would neither perceive nor feel. The summing up of all was that they apprehended no obstruction to the proposed union from any objection on her part, as soon as she should be made acquainted with their wishes.

In the course of that very evening they introduced the subject to her, with that natural confidence which resulted from their foregone conclusions upon it.

"Alley," said her mother, "I hope you're in good spirits this evening."

"Indifferent enough, mamma; my spirits, you know, are not naturally good."

"And why should they not?" said her mother; "what on earth have you to trouble you?"

"O, mamma," she exclaimed, "you don't know how often I miss my sister;—at night I think I see her, and she looks pale and melancholy, and full of sorrow —just as she did when she felt that her hope of life was gone forever. O, how willingly—how joyfully—would I return her fortune, and if I had ten times as much of my own, along with it, if it could only bring her back to me again!"

"Well, you know, my darling, that can't be done; but cheer up; I have good news for you—news that I am sure will delight you."

"But I don't stand in need of any good news, mamma."

This simple reply proved an unexpected capsize to her mother, who knew not how to proceed; but, in the moment of her embarrassment, looked to her husband for assistance.

"My dear Alice," said her father, "the fact is this —you have achieved a conquest, and there has been a proposal of marriage made for you."

Alice instantly suspected the individual from whom the proposal came, and turned pale as death.

"That does not cheer my spirits then, papa."

"That may be, my dear Alice," replied her father; "but, in the opinion of your mother and me, it ought."

"From what quarter has it come, papa, may I ask? I am living very lonely and retired here, you know."

"The proposal, then, my dear child, has come from Henry Woodward, this day; and what will surprise

you more, through his mother, too—who has been of late such an inveterate enemy to our family. So far as I have seen of Henry himself, he is everything I could wish for a son-in-law."

"But you have seen very little of him, papa."

"What I *have* seen of him has pleased me very much, Alice."

"How strange," said she, musingly, "that father and daughter should draw such different conclusions from the same premises. The very thought of that young man sinks the heart within me. I beg, once for all, that you will never mention his name to me on this subject, and in this light, again. It is not that I hate him—I trust I hate nobody—but I feel an antipathy against him; and what is more, I feel a kind of terror when I even think of him; and an oppression, for which I cannot account, whilst I am in his society."

"This is very strange, Alice," replied her father; "and, I am afraid, rather foolish, too. There is nothing in his face, person, manner, or conversation that, in my opinion, is not calculated to attract any young woman in his own rank of life—at least, I think so."

"Well, but the poor child," said her mother, "knows nothing about love—how could she? Sure, my dear Alley, true love never begins until after marriage. You don't know what a dislike I had to your father, there, whilst our friends on both sides were making up the courtship. They literally dragged me into it."

"Yes, Alley," added her father, smiling, "and they literally dragged *me* into it; and yet, when we came together, Alice, there never was a happier couple in existence."

Alice could not help smiling, but the smile soon passed away. "That may be all very true," she replied, "but in the meantime you must not press me on this subject. Don't entertain it for a moment. I shall never marry this man. Put an end to it—see his mother, and inform her, without loss of time, of the unalterable determination I have made. Do not palter with them, father—do not, mother; and above all things, don't attempt to sacrifice the happiness of your only daughter. *I* could make any sacrifice for your happiness but this; and if, in obedience to your wishes, I made it, I can tell you that I would soon be *with my sister*. You both know that I am not strong, and that I am incapable of severe struggles. Don't, then, harass me upon this matter."

She here burst into tears, and for a few minutes wept bitterly.

"We must give it up," said her father, looking at Mrs. Goodwin.

"No such thing," replied his wife; "think of our own case, and how happy we have been in spite of ourselves."

"Ay, but we were neither of us fools, Martha; at least you were not, or you would never have suffered yourself to be persuaded into matrimony, as you did at last. There was, it is true, an affected frown upon your brow; but then, again, there was a very sly smile under it. As for me, I would have escaped the match if I could; but no matter, it was all for the best, although neither of us anticipated as much. Alice, my child, think of what we have said to you; reflect upon it. Our object is to make you happy; our expe-

rience of life is much greater than yours. Don't reply to us now; we will give you a reasonable time to think of it. Consider that you will add to your mother's happiness and mine by consenting to such an unobjectionable match. This young man will, of course, inherit his uncle's property; he will elevate you in life; he is handsome, accomplished, and evidently knows the world, and you can look up to him as a husband of whom you will have a just right to feel proud. Allow the young man to visit you; study him as closely as you may; but above all things do not cherish an unfounded antipathy against him or any one."

Several interviews took place afterwards between Alice and Henry Woodward; and after each interview her parents sought her opinion of him, and desired to know whether she was beginning to think more favorably of him than she had hitherto done. Still, however, came the same reply. Every interview only increased her repugnance to the match, and her antipathy to the man. At length she consented to allow him one last interview—the last, she asserted, which she would ever afford him on the subject, and he accordingly presented himself to know her final determination. Not that from what came out from their former conversations he had any grounds, as a reasonable man, to expect a change of opinion on her part; but as the property was his object, he resolved to leave nothing undone to overcome her prejudice against him if he could. They were, accordingly, left in the drawing-room to discuss the matter as best they might, but with a hope on the part of her parents that, knowing, as she did, how earnestly their hearts were fixed upon

her marriage with him, she might, if only for their sakes, renounce her foolish antipathy, and be prevailed upon by his ardor and his eloquence to consent at last.

"Well, Miss Goodwin," said he, when they were left together, "this I understand, and what is more, I fear, is to be my day of doom. Heaven grant that it may be a favorable one, for I am badly prepared to see my hopes blasted, and my affection for you spurned! My happiness, my dear Miss Goodwin—my happiness for life depends upon the result of this interview. I know—but I should not say so—for in this instance I must be guided by hearsay—well, I know from hearsay that your heart is kind and affectionate. Now I believe this; for who can look upon your face and doubt it? Believing this, then, how can you, when you know that the happiness of a man who loves you beyond the power of language to express, is at stake, depends upon your will—how can you, I say, refuse to make that individual—who appreciates all your virtues, as I do—who feels the influence of your extraordinary beauty, as I do—who contemplates *your* future happiness as the great object of his life, as I do—how can you, I say, refuse to make that man happy?"

"Mr. Woodward," she said, "I will not reply to your arguments; I simply wish to ask you, Are you a gentleman?—in other words, a man of integrity and principle?"

"Do you doubt me, Miss Goodwin?" he inquired, as if he felt somewhat hurt.

"It is very difficult, Mr. Woodward," she replied, "to know the heart; I request, however, a direct and a serious answer, for I can assure you that I am about

to place the deepest possible confidence in your faith and honor."

"O," he exclaimed, "that is sufficient; in such a case I feel bound to respect your confidence as sacred; do not hesitate to confide in me. Let me perish a thousand times sooner than abuse such a trust. Speak out, Miss Goodwin."

"It is necessary that I should," she replied, "both for your sake and my own. Know, then, that my heart is not at my own disposal; it is engaged to another."

"I can only listen, Miss Goodwin—I can only listen,—but—but—excuse me,—proceed."

"My heart, as I said, is engaged to another—and that other is your brother Charles."

Woodward fixed his eyes upon her face—already scarlet with blushes, and when she ventured to raise hers upon him, she beheld a countenance sunk apparently in the deepest sorrow.

"Alas! Miss Goodwin," he replied, "you have filled my heart with a double grief. I could resign you—of course it would and must be with the most inexpressible anguish,—but to resign you to such a——. O!" he proceeded, shaking his head sorrowfully, "you know not in what a position of torture you place me. You said you believed me to be a gentleman; so I trust—I feel—I am, and what is more, a brother, and an affectionate brother, if I—O, my God, what am I to do? How, knowing what I know of that unfortunate young man, could I ever have expected *this?* In the meantime I thank you for your confidence, Miss Goodwin; I hope it was God himself who inspired you to place it in me, and that it may be the means of your

salvation from—but perhaps I am saying too much; he is my brother; excuse me, I am not just now cool and calm enough to say what I would wish, and what you, poor child, neither know nor suspect, and perhaps I shall never mention it; but you must give me time. Of course, under the circumstances you have mentioned, I resign all hopes of *my own* happiness with you; but, so help me Heaven, if I shall resign all hopes of *yours*. I cannot now speak at further length; I am too much surprised, too much agitated, too much shocked at what I have heard; but I shall see you, if you will allow me, to-morrow; and as I cannot become your husband, perhaps I may become your guardian angel. Allow me to see you to-morrow. You have taken me so completely by surprise that I am quite incapable of speaking on this subject, as perhaps—but I know not yet—I must become more cool, and reflect deeply upon what my conduct ought to be. Alas! my dear Miss Goodwin, little you suspect how completely your happiness and misery are in my power. Will you permit me to see you to-morrow?"

"Certainly, sir," replied Alice, "since it seems that you have something of more than ordinary importance to communicate to me—something which, I suppose, I ought to know. I shall see you."

He then took his leave with an air of deep melancholy and sorrow, and left poor Alice in a state of anxiety very difficult to be described. Her mind became filled with a sudden and unusual alarm; she trembled like an aspen leaf; and when her mother came to ask her the result of the interview, she found her pale as death and in tears.

"Why, Alley, my child," said she, "what is the matter? Why do you look so much alarmed, and why are you in tears? Has the man been rude or offensive to you?"

"No, mamma, he has not; but—but—I am to see him again to-morrow, and until then, mamma, do not ask me anything upon the subject of our interview to-day."

Her mother felt rather gratified at this. There was, then, to be *another* interview, and that was a proof that Woodward had not been finally discarded. So far, matters did not seem so disheartening as she had anticipated. She looked upon Alice's agitation, and the tears she had been shedding, as the result of the constraint which she had put upon her inclination in giving him, she hoped, a favorable reception; and with this impression she went to communicate what she conceived to be the good intelligence to her husband.

Alice, until the next interview took place, passed a wretched time of it. As the reader knows, she was constitutionally timid and easily alarmed, and she consequently anticipated something very distressing in the disclosures which Woodward was about to make. That there was something uncommon and painful in connection with Charles Lindsay to be mentioned, was quite evident from Woodward's language and his unaccountable agitation. He was evidently in earnest; and, from the suddenness with which the confession of her attachment to his brother came upon him, it was impossible, she concluded, that he could have had time to concoct the hints which he threw out. Could she have been mistaken in Charles? And yet, why not? Had he not,

as it were, abandoned her ever since the occurrence of the family feud? and why should he have done so unless there had been some reason for it? It was quite clear, she thought, that, whatever revelation Woodward was about to make concerning him, it was one which would occasion himself great pain as his brother, and that nothing but the necessity of saving her from unhappiness could force him to speak out. In fact, her mind was in a tumult; she felt quite nervous—tremulous—afraid of some disclosure that might destroy her hopes and her happiness, and make her wretched for life.

On the next day Woodward made his appearance, and found Alice by herself in the drawing-room, as when he left her the day before. His countenance seemed the very exponent of suffering and misery.

"Miss Goodwin," said he, "I have passed a period of the deepest anxiety since I saw you last. You may, indeed, read what I have suffered, and am suffering, in my face, for unfortunately it is a tell-tale upon my heart; but I cannot help that, nor should I wish it to be otherwise. Believe me, however, that it is not for myself I suffer, but for you, and the prospects of your future happiness. You must look upon my conduct now as perfectly disinterested, for I have no hope. What, then, should that conduct be in me as a generous man, which I trust I am, but to promote *your* happiness as far as I can? and on that I am determined. You say you love my brother; are you certain that your affection is reciprocated?"

"I believe your brother certainly did love me," she replied, with a tremor in her voice which she could not prevent.

"Just so, my dear Miss Goodwin; that is well expressed — *did* love you; perhaps it may have been so; possessing anything like a heart, I don't see how it could have been otherwise."

"I will thank you, Mr. Woodward, to state what you have to say with as little circumlocution and ambiguity as possible. Take me out of suspense, and let me know the worst. Do not, I entreat you, keep me in a state of uncertainty. Although I have acknowledged my love for your brother, in order to relieve myself from your addresses, which I could not encourage, still I am not without the pride of a woman who respects herself."

"I am aware of that; but before I proceed, allow me to ask, in order that I may see my way the clearer, to what length did the expression of my brother's affection go?"

"It went so far," she replied, blushing, "as an avowal of mutual attachment; indeed, it might be called an engagement; but ever since the death of his cousin, and the estrangement of our families, he seems to have forgotten me. It is very strange; when I was a portionless girl he was ardent and tender, but, ever since this unfortunate property came into my hands, he seems to have joined in the hard and unjust feeling of his family against me. I have certainly met him since at parties, and on other occasions, but we met almost as strangers; he was not the Charles Lindsay whom I had known when I was comparatively a poor girl; he appeared to shrink from me. In the meantime, as I have already confessed to you, he has my heart; and, so long as he has, I cannot encourage the addresses of any other man."

Woodward paused, and looked upon her with well-feigned admiration and sorrow.

"The man is blind," he at length said, "not only to the fascinations of your person and character, but to his own interests. What is he in point of property? Nothing. He has no rich uncle at his back to establish him in life upon a scale, almost, of magnificence. Why, it is since you came into this property that he ought to have urged his suit with greater earnestness. I am speaking now like a man of the world, Miss Goodwin; and I am certain that he would have done so but for one fact, of which I am aware: he has got into a low intrigue with a peasant's daughter, who possesses an influence over him such as I have never witnessed. She certainly is very beautiful, it is said; but of that I cannot speak, as I have not yet seen her; but I am afraid, Miss Goodwin, from all I hear, that a very little time will disclose her calamity and his guilt. You will now understand what I felt yesterday when you made me acquainted with your pure and virtuous attachment to such a man; what shall I say," he added, rising, and walking indignantly through the room, "to such a profligate?"

"Mr. Woodward," replied Alice, "I can scarcely believe that; you must have been imposed on by some enemy of his. Depend upon it you are. I think I know Charles well—too well to deem him capable of such profligacy; I will not believe it."

"I don't wish you, my dear Miss Goodwin, to believe it; I only wish you to suspend your opinion until time shall convince you. I considered it my duty to mention the fact, and after that to leave you to the exercise of your own judgment."

"I will *not* believe it," replied Alice, "because I place his estrangement to a higher and nobler motive, and one more in accordance with his honorable and generous character. I do believe, Mr. Woodward, that his apparent coldness to me, of late, proceeds from delicacy, and a disinterestedness that is honorable to him; at least I will interpret his conduct in this light until I am perfectly convinced that he is the profligate you describe him. I do not impute, in the disclosure you have made, ungenerous motives to you; because, if you attempted to displace my affections from your brother by groundless slander or deliberate falsehood, you would be a monster, and as such I would look upon you, and will, if it appears that you are maligning him for selfish purposes of your own. I will now tell you to what I impute his apparent estrangement; I impute it to honor, sir—to an honorable pride. He knows now that I am rich; at least comparatively so, and that he is comparatively poor; he hesitates to renew our relations with each other lest I might suspect him of mingling a selfish principle with his affection. That is the conduct of a man of honor; and until the facts you hint at come out broadly, and to public proof, as such I shall continue to consider him. But, Mr. Woodward, I shall not rest here; I shall see him, and give him that to which his previous affection and honorable conduct have entitled him at my hands—that is, an opportunity of making an explanation to myself. But, at all events, I assure you of this fact, that, if I do not marry him, I shall never marry another."

"Great God!" exclaimed Woodward, "what a

jewel he has lost. Well, Miss Goodwin, I have nothing further to say; if I am wrong, time will convict me. I have mentioned these matters to you, not on my own account but yours. I have no hope of your affection; and if there were any living man, except myself, to whom I should wish to see you united, it would be my brother Charles—that is, if I thought he was worthy of you. All I ask of you, however, is to wait a little; remain calm and quiet, and time will tell you which of us feels the deepest interest in your happiness. In the meantime, aware of your attachment to him, as I am, I beg you will no longer consider me in any other light than that of a sincere friend. To seduce innocence, indeed—but I will not dwell upon it; the love of woman, they say, is generous and forgiving; I hope yours will be so. But, Miss Goodwin, as I can approach you no longer in the character of a lover, I trust I may be permitted the privilege of visiting the family as a friend and acquaintance. Now that your decision against me is known, it will be contrary to the wishes of our folks at home; especially of my mother, whose temper, as I suppose you are aware, is none of the coolest; you will allow me, then, to visit you, but no longer as claimant for your hand."

"I shall always be happy to see you, Mr. Woodward, but upon that condition."

After he had taken his leave, her parents, anxious to hear the result, came up to the drawing-room, where they found her in a kind of a reverie, from which their appearance startled her.

"Well, Alley," said her mother, smiling, "is everything concluded between you?"

"Yes, mamma," replied Alice, "everything is concluded, and finally, too."

"Did he name the day?" said her father, smiling gravely.

Alice stared at him; then recollecting herself, she replied,—

"I thought I told you both that this was a man I could never think of marrying. I don't understand him; he is either very candid or very hypocritical; and I feel it painful, and, besides, unnecessary in me to take the trouble of balancing the character of a person who loses ground in my opinion on every occasion I see him. Of course, I have discarded him, and I know very well that his mother will cast fire and sword between us, as she did before; but to do Mr. Woodward justice, he proposes to stand aloof from her resentments, and wishes to visit us as usual."

"Then it's all over between you and him?" said her mother.

"It is; and I never gave you reason to anticipate any other result, mamma."

"No, indeed," said her father, "you never did, Alice; but still I think it is generous in him to separate himself from the resentments of that woman, and as a friend we will be always glad to see him."

"I know not how it is," replied Alice; "but I felt that the expression of his eye, during our last interview, oppressed me excessively; it was never off me. There was a killing—a malignant influence in it, that thrilled through me with pain; but, perhaps, I can account for that. As it is, he has asked leave to visit us as usual, and to stand, with respect to me, in the

light of a friend only. So far as I am concerned, papa, I could not refuse him a common privilege of civility; but, to tell you both the truth, I shall always meet him not only with reluctance, but with something almost amounting to fear."

Woodward, now that he had learned his fate, and was aware that his brother stood between him and his expectations, experienced a feeling of vengeance against him and Alice, which he neither could, nor attempted to, restrain. The rage of his mother, too, when she heard that the latter had rejected him, and avowed her attachment to Charles, went beyond all bounds. Her son, however, who possessed a greater restraint upon his feelings, and was master of more profound hypocrisy and cunning, requested her to conceal the attachment of Alice to his brother, as a matter not to be disclosed on any account.

"Leave me to my resources," said he, "and it will go hard or I will so manage Charles as to disentangle him from the consequences of her influence over him. But the families, mother, must not be for the present permitted to visit again. On the contrary, it is better for our purposes that they should not see each other as formerly, nor resume their intimacy. If you suffer your passions to overcome you, even in our own family, the consequence is that you prevent us both from playing our game as we ought, and as we shall do. Leave Charles to me; I shall make O'Connor of use, too; but above all things do not breathe a syllable to any one of them of my having been thrown off. I think, as it is, I have damped her ardor for him a little, and if she had not been obstinate and foolishly romantic, I

would have extinguished it completely. As it is, I told her to leave the truth of what I mentioned to her respecting him, to time, and if she does I shall rest satisfied. Will you now be guided by me, my dear mother?"

"I will endeavor to do so," she replied; "but it will be a terrible restraint upon me, and I scarcely know how I shall be able to keep myself calm. I will try, however; the object is worth it. You know if she dies without issue the property reverts to you."

"Yes, mother, the object *is* worth much more than the paltry sacrifice I ask of you. Keep yourself quiet, then, and we will accomplish our purposes yet. I shall set instruments to work who will ripen our projects, and, I trust, ultimately accomplish them."

"Why, what instruments do you intend to use?"

"I know the girl's disposition and character well. I have learned much concerning her from Casey, who is often there as a suitor for the fair hand of her favorite maid. Casey, however, is a man in whom I can place no confidence; he is too much attached to the rest of the family, and does not at all relish me. I will make him an unconscious agent of mine, notwithstanding. In the meantime, let nothing appear in your manner that might induce them to suspect the present position of affairs between us. They may come to know it soon enough, and then it will be our business to act with greater energy and decision."

And so it was arranged between this precious mother and son.

Woodward, who was quick in the conception of his projects, had them all laid even then; and in order to

work them out with due effect, he resolved to pay a visit to our friend, Sol Donnel, the herb doctor. This hypocritical old villain was uncle to Caterine Collins, the fortune-teller, who had prognosticated to him such agreeable tidings on the night of the bonfire. She, too, was to be made useful, and, so far as money could do it, faithful to his designs—diabolical as they were. He accordingly went one night, about the hour mentioned by Donnel, to the cabin of that worthy man; and knocking gently at the door, was replied to in a peevish voice, like that of an individual who had been interrupted in the performance of some act of piety and devotion.

"Who is there?" said the voice inside.

"A friend," replied Woodward, in a low, cautious tone; "a friend, who wishes to speak to you."

"I can't spake to you to-night," replied Sol; "you're disturbin' me at my prayers."

"But I wish to speak to you on particular business."

"What business? Let me finish my padereens and go to bed like a vile sinner, as I am—God help me. Who are you?"

"I don't intend to tell you that just now, Solomon; do you wish me to shout it out to you, in order that the whole neighborhood may hear it? I have *private* business with you."

Well," replied the other, "I think, by your voice and langridge, your're not a common man, and, aldough it's against my rule to open at this time o' night to any one, still I'll let you in—and sure I must only say my prayers aftherwards. In the manetime it's a sin for you or any one to disturb me at them; if you

knew what the value of one sinful sowl is in the sight of God, you would'nt do it—no, indeed. Wait till I light a candle."

He accordingly lighted a candle, and in the course of a few minutes admitted Woodward to his herbarium. When the latter entered, he looked about him with a curiosity not unnatural under the circumstances. His first sensation, however, was one that affected his olfactory nerves very strongly. A combination of smells, struggling with each other, as it were, for predominance, almost overpowered him. The good and the bad, the pleasant and the oppressive, were here mingled up in one sickening exhalation—for the disagreeable prevailed. The whole cabin was hung about with bunches of herbs, some dry and withered, others fresh and green, giving evidence that they had been only newly gathered. A number of bottles of all descriptions stood on wooden shelves, but without labels, for the old sinner's long practice and great practical memory enabled him to know the contents of every bottle with as much accuracy as if they had been labelled in capitals.

"How the devil can you live and sleep in such a suffocating compound of vile smells as this?" asked Woodward.

The old man glanced at him keenly, and replied,—

"Practice makes masther, sir—I'm used to them; I feel no smell but a good smell; and I sleep sound enough, barrin' when I wake o' one purpose to think of and repent o' my sins, and of the ungrateful world that is about me; people that don't thank me for doin' them good—God forgive them! *amin acheernah!*"

"Why, now," replied Woodward, "if I had a friend of mine that was unwell—observe me, a *friend* of mine —that stood between me and my own interests, and that I was kind and charitable enough to forget any ill-will against him, and wished to recover him from his illness through the means of your skill and herbs, could you not assist me in such a good and Christian work?"

The old fellow gave him a shrewd look and piercing glance, but immediately replied,—

"Why, to be sure, I could; what else is the business of my whole life but to cure my fellow-cratures of their complaints?"

"Yes; I believe you are very fortunate in that way; however, for the present, I don't require your aid, but it is very likely I shall soon. There *is* a friend of mine in poor health, and if he doesn't otherwise recover, I shall probably apply to you; but, then, the party I speak of has such a prejudice against quacks of all sorts, that I fear we must substitute one of your draughts, in a *private way*, for that of the regular doctor. That, however, is not what I came to speak to you about. Is not Caterine Collins, the fortune-teller, a niece of yours?"

"She is, sir."

"Where and when could I see her?—but mark me, I don't wish to be seen speaking to her in public."

"Why not?—what's to prevent you from chattin' wid her in an aisy pleasant way in the streets; nobody will obsarve any thing then, or think it strange that a gentleman should have a funny piece o' discoorse wid a fortune-teller."

"I don't know that; observations might be made afterwards."

"But what can she do for you that *I* can't? She's a bad graft to have anything to do wid, and I wouldn't recommend you to put much trust in her."

"Why so?"

"Why, she's nothin' else than a schemer."

Little did old Solomon suspect that he was raising her very highly in the estimation of his visitor by falling foul of her in this manner.

"At all events," said Woodward, "I wish to see her; and, as I said, I came for the express purpose of asking you where and when I could see her—privately, I mean."

"That's what I can't tell you at the present spakin'," replied Solomon. "She has no fixed place of livin', but is here to-day and away to-morrow. God help you, she has travelled over the whole kingdom tellin' fortunes. Sometimes she's a dummy, and spakes to them by signs—sometimes a gypsy—sometimes she's this and sometimes she's that, but not often the same thing long; she's of as many colors as the rainbow. But if you do wish to see her, there's a chance that you may to-morrow. A conjurer has come to town, and he's to open to morrow, for both town and country, and she'll surely be here, for that's taking the bit out of her mouth."

"A conjurer!"

"Yes, he was here before sometime ago, about the night of that bonfire that was put out by the shower o' blood, but somehow he disappeared from the place, and he's now come back."

"A conjurer—well, I shall see the conjurer myself to-morrow; but can you give me no more accurate information with respect to your niece?"

"Sarra syllable—as I tould you, she's never two nights in the same place; but, if I should see her, I'll let her know your wishes; and what might I say, sir, that you wanted her to do for you?"

"That's none of your affair, most sagacious Solomon—I wish to speak with her myself, and privately, too; and if you see her, tell her to meet me here to-morrow night about this hour."

"I'll do so; but God forgive you for disturbin' me in my devotions, as you did. It's not often I'd give them up for any one; but sure out of regard for the proprietor o' the town I'd do that, and more for you."

"Here," replied Woodward, putting some silver into his hand, "let that console you; and tell your niece when you see her that I am a good paymaster; and, if I should stand in need of *your* skill, you shall find me so, too. Good-night, and may your prayers be powerful, as I know they come from a Christian heart, honest Solomon."

CHAPTER XI.

A CONJURER'S LEVEE.

WE cannot form at this distance of time any adequate notion of the influence which a conjurer of those days exercised over the minds and feelings of the ignorant. It was necessary that he should be, or be supposed at least to be, well versed in judicial astrology, the use of medicine, and consequently able to cast a nativity, or cure any earthly complaint. There is scarcely any grade or species of superstition that is not associated with or founded upon fear. The conjurer, consequently, was both feared and respected; and his character appeared in different phases to the people—each phase adapted to the corresponding character of those with whom he had to deal. The educated of those days, with but few exceptions, believed in astrology, and the possibility of developing the future fate and fortunes of an individual, whenever the hour of his birth and the name of the star or planet under which he was born could be ascertained. The more ignorant class, however, generally associated the character of the conjurer with that of the necromancer or magician, and consequently attributed his predictions to demoniacal influence. Neither were they much mistaken, for they only judged of these impostors as they found them. In nineteen cases out of twenty, the

character of the low astrologer, the necromancer, and the quack was associated, and the influence of the stars and the aid of the devil were both considered as giving assurance of supernatural knowledge to the same individual. This unaccountable anxiety to see, as it were, the volume of futurity unrolled, so far as it discloses individual fate, has characterized mankind ever since the world began; and hence, even in the present day, the same anxiety among the ignorant to run after spae-women, fortune-tellers, and gypsies, in order to have their fortunes told through the means of their adroit predictions.

On the following morning the whole town of Rathfillan was in a state of excitement by the rumor that a conjurer had arrived, for the purpose not only of telling all their future fates and fortunes, but of discovering all those who had been guilty of theft, and the places where the stolen property was to be found. This may seem a bold stroke; but when we consider the materials upon which the sagacious conjurer had to work, we need not feel surprised at his frequent success.

The conjurer in question had taken up his residence in the best inn which the little town of Rathfillan afforded. Immediately after his arrival he engaged the beadle, with bell in hand, to proclaim his presence in the town, and the purport of his visit to that part of the country. This was done through the medium of printed handbills, which that officer read and distributed through the crowds who attended him. The bill in question was as follows:

"To the inhabitants of Rathfillan and the adjacent

neighborhood, the following important communications are made:—

"Her Zander Vanderpluckem, the celebrated German conjurer, astrologist, and doctor, who has had the honor of predicting the deaths of three kings, five queens, twenty-one princesses, and seven princes, all of royal blood, and in the best possible state of health at the time the predictions were made, and to all of whom he had himself the honor of being medical attendant and state physician, begs to announce his arrival in this town. He is the seventh son of the great and renowned conjurer, Her Zander Vanderhoaxem, who made the stars tremble, and the devil sweat himself to powder in a fit of repentance. His influence over the stars and heavenly bodies is tremendous, and it is a well-known fact throughout the universe that he has them in such a complete state of terror and subjection, that a single comet dare not wag his tail unless by his permission. He travels up and down the milky way one night in every month, to see that the dairies of the sky are all right, and that that celebrated path be properly lighted; brings down a pail of the milk with him, which he churns into butyrus, an unguent so efficacious that it cures all maladies under the sun, and many that never existed. It can be had at five shillings a spoonful. He can make Ursa Major, or the Great Bear, dance without a leader, and has taught Pisces, or the Fishes, to live out of water—a prodigy never known or heard of before since the creation of terra firma. Such is the power of the great and celebrated Her Vanderpluckem over the stars and

planets. But now to come nearer home: he cures all patients of all complaints. No person asking his assistance need ever be sick, unless when they happen to be unwell. His insight into futurity is such that, whenever he looks far into it, he is obliged to shut his eyes. He can tell fortunes, discover hidden wealth to any amount, and create such love between sweethearts as will be sure to end in matrimony. He is complete master of the fairies, and has the whole generation of them under his thumb; and he generally travels with the king of the fairies in his left pocket closed up in a snuffbox. He interprets dreams and visions, and is never mistaken; can foretell whether a child unborn will be a boy or a girl, and can also inform the parents whether it will be brought to the bench or the gallows. He can also foretell backwards, and disclose to the individual anything that shall happen to him or her for the last seven years. His philters, concocted upon the profound science of alchemistic philosophy, have been sought for by persons of the highest distinction, who have always found them to produce the very effects for which they were intended, to wit, mutual affection between the parties, uniformly ending in matrimony and happiness. Devils expelled, ghosts and spirits laid on the shortest notice, and at the most moderate terms. Also, recipes to farmers for good weather or rain, according as they may be wanted.

"(Signed,) HER ZANDER VANDERPLUCKEM,"

"The Greatest Conjurer, Astrologer, and Doctor in the world."

To describe the effect that this bill, which, by the way, was posted against every dead wall in the town,

had upon the people, would be impossible. The inn in which he stopped was, in a short time, crowded with applicants, either for relief or information, according as their ills or wishes came under the respective heads of his advertisement. The room he occupied was upstairs, and had a door that led into a smaller one, or kind of closet, at the end of it; here sat an old-looking man, dressed in a black coat, black breeches, and black stockings; the very picture of the mysterious individual who had appeared and disappeared so suddenly at the bonfire. He had on a full-bottomed wig, and a long white beard, depending from the lower part of his face, swept his reverend breast. A large book lay open before him, on the pages of which were inscribed cabalistic characters and strange figures. He only admitted those who wished to consult him, singly; for on no occasion did he ever permit two persons at a time to approach him. All the paraphernalia of astrology were exposed upon the same table, at one end of which he sat in an arm-chair, awaiting the commencement of operations. At length a good-looking country woman, of about forty-five years, made her appearance, and, after a low courtesy, was solemnly motioned to take a seat.

"Well, Mrs. Houlaghan," said he, "how do you do?"

The poor woman got as pale as death. Heavenly Father, thought she, how does it happen that he comes to know my name!

"Mrs. Houlaghan, what can I do for you? not that I need ask, for I could give a very good guess at it;" and this he added with a very sage and solemn visage, precisely as if he knew the whole circumstances.

"Why, your honor," she replied — "but, blessed Father, how did you come to know my name?"

"That's a question," he replied, solemnly, "which you ought not to ask *me*. It is enough that you see I know it. How is your husband, Frank, and how is your daughter, Mary? She's complaining of late — is she not?"

This private knowledge of the family completely overwhelmed her, and she felt unable to speak for some time.

"Do not be in a hurry, Mrs. Houlaghan," said he, mildly; "reflect upon what you are about to say, and take your time."

"It's a ghost, your reverence," she replied—"a ghost that haunts the house."

"Very well, Mrs. Houlaghan; the fee for laying a ghost is five shillings; I will trouble you for that sum; we conjurers have no power until we get money from the party concerned, and then we can work with effect."

The simple woman, in the agitation of the moment, handed him the amount of his demand, and then collected herself to hear the response, and the means of laying the ghost.

"Well, now," said he, "tell me all about this ghost, Mrs. Houlaghan. How long has it been troubling the family?"

"Why, then, ever since Frank lost the use of his sight, now goin' upon five months."

"When does it appear?"

"Why, generally afther twelve at night; and what makes it more strange is, that poor Mary's more afeard

o' me than she is of the ghost. She says it appears to her in her bedroom every night; but she knows I'm so timersome that she keeps her door always locked for fraid I'd see it, poor child."

"Does it terrify her?"

"Not a bit; she says it does her no harm on earth, and that it's great company for her when she can't sleep."

"Has Mary many sweethearts?"

"She has two: one o' them rather ould, but wealthy and well to do; her father and myself, wishin' to see her well settled, are doin' all we can to get her consent to marry him."

"Who's the other?"

"One Brine Oge M'Gaveran, a good-lookin' vagabone, no doubt, but not worth a copper."

"Is she fond of him?"

"Troth, to tell you the truth, I'm afeard she is; he has been often seen about the house in the evenin's."

"Well, Mrs. Houlaghan, I will tell you how to lay this ghost."

"God bless you, sir; poor Mary, although she purtends that the ghost is good company for her, is lookin' pale and very quare somehow."

"Well, then, here is the receipt for laying the ghost: Marry her as soon as you possibly can to Brine Oge M'Gaveran—do that and the ghost will never appear again; but if you refuse to do it—I may lay *that* ghost of course—but another ghost, as like it as an egg is to an egg, will haunt your house until she is married to Brien Oge. You have wealth yourselves, and you can make Brine and her comfortable if you wish.

She is your only child" — ("Blessed Father, think of him knowin' this!")—"and as you are well to do in the world, it's both a sin and a scandal for you to urge a pretty young girl of nineteen to marry an old miserly runt of fifty. You know now how to lay the ghost, Mrs. Houlaghan—and that is what I can do for you; but if you do not marry her to Brine Oge, as I said, another ghost will certainly contrive to haunt you. You may now withdraw."

A farmer, with a very shrewd and comic expression of countenance, next made his appearance, and taking his hat off and laying it on the floor with his staff across it, took his seat, as he had been motioned to do, upon the chair which Mrs. Houlaghan had just vacated.

"Well, my friend," said the conjurer, "what's troubling you?"

"A crock o' butther, your honor."

"How is that? explain yourself."

"Why, sir, a crock o' butther that was stolen from me; and I'm tould for a sartinty that you can discover the thief o' the world that stole it."

"And so I can. Do you suspect anybody?"

"Troth, sir, I can't say—for I live in a very honest neighborhood. The only two thieves that were in it—Charley Folliott and George Austin—were hanged not long ago, and I don't know anybody else in the country side that would stale it."

"What family have you?"

"Three sons, sir."

"How many daughters?"

"One, sir,—but she's only a girsha—(a little girl)."

"I suppose your sons are very good children to you?"

"Betther never broke bread, sir—all but the youngest."

"What age is he?"

"About nineteen, sir, or goin' an twenty; but he's a heart-scald to me and the family—although he's his mother's pet; the divil can't stand him for dress—and, moreover, he's given to liquor and card-playin', and is altogether goin' to the bad. Widin the last two or three days he has bought himself a new hat, a new pair o' brogues, and a pair o' span-new breeches—and, upon my conscience, it wasn't from me or mine he got the money to buy them."

The conjurer looked solemnly into his book for some minutes, and then raising his head, fastened his cold, glassy, glittering eyes on the farmer with a glance that filled him with awe.

"I have found it out," said he; "there are two parties to the theft—your wife and your youngest son. Go to the hucksters of the town, and ask them if they will buy any more butter like the last of yours that they bought, and, depend on it, you will find out the truth."

"Then you think, sir, it was my wife and son between them that stole the butter?"

"Not a doubt of it, and if you tell them that *I* said so, they will confess it. You owe me five shillings."

The farmer put his hand in his pocket, and placing the money before him, left the room, satisfied that there was no earthly subject, past, present, or to come, with which the learned conjurer was not acquainted.

The next individual that came before him was a very pretty buxom widow, who, having made the venerable conjurer a courtsey, sat down and immediately burst into tears.

"What is the matter with you, madam?" asked the astrologer, rather surprised at this unaccountable exhibition of the pathetic.

"O, sir, I lost, about fifteen months ago, one of the best husbands that ever broke the world's bread."

Here came another effusion, accompanied with a very distracted blow of the nose.

"That must have been very distressing to you, madam; he must have been extremely fond of such a very pretty wife."

"O sir, he doted alive upon me, as I did upon him —poor, darling old Paul."

"Ah, he was old, was he?"

"Yes, sir, and left me very rich."

"But what do you wish *me* to do for you?"

"Why, sir, he was very fond of money; was, in fact, a—a—kind of miser in his way. My father and mother forced me to marry the dear old man, and I did so to please them; but at the same time he was very kind in his manner to me—indeed, so kind that he allowed me a shilling a month for pocket money."

"Well, but what is your object in coming to me?"

"Why, sir, to ask your opinion on a case of great difficulty."

"Very well, madam; you shall have the best opinion in the known world upon the subject—that is, as soon as I hear it. Speak out without hesitation, and conceal nothing."

"Why, sir, the poor dear man before his death—ah, that ever my darling old Paul should have been taken away from me!—the poor dear man, before his death—ahem—before his death—O, ah,"—here came another effusion—"began to—to—to—get jealous of me with a young man in the neighborhood that—that—I was fond of before I married my dear old Paul."

"Was the young man in question handsome?"

"Indeed, sir, he was, and is, very handsome—and the impudent minxes of the parish are throwing their caps at him in dozens."

"But still you are keeping me in the dark."

"Well, sir, I will tell you my difficulty. When poor dear old Paul was dying, he called me to the bedside one day, and says to me: 'Biddy,' says he, 'I'm going to die—and you know I am wealthy; but, in the meantime, I won't leave you sixpence.' 'It's not the loss of your money I am thinking of, my darling Paul,' says I, 'but the loss of yourself'—and I kissed him, and cried. 'You didn't often kiss me that way before,' said he—'and I know what you're kissing me for now.' 'No,' I said, 'I did not; because I had no notion then of losing you, my own darling Paul—you don't know how I loved you all along, Paul,' said I; 'kiss me again, jewel.' 'Now,' said he, 'I'm not going to leave you sixpence, and I'll tell you why—I saw young Charley Mulvany, that you were courting before I married you—I saw him, I say, through the windy there, kiss you, with my own eyes, when you thought I was asleep—and you put your arms about his neck and hugged him,' said he. I must be par-

ticular, sir, in order that you may understand the difficulty I'm in."

"Proceed, madam," said the conjurer. "If I were young I certainly would envy Charley Mulvany—but proceed."

"Well, sir, I replied to him: 'Paul, dear,' said I, 'that was a kiss of friendship—and the reason of it was, that poor Charley was near crying when he heard that you were going to die and to leave me so lonely.' 'Well,' said he, 'that may be—many a thing may be that's not likely—and that may be one of them. Go and get a prayer-book, and come back here.' Well, sir, I got a book and went back. 'Now,' said he, 'if you swear by the contents of that book that you will never put a ring on man after my death, I'll leave you my property.' 'Ah, God pardon you, Paul, darling,' said I, 'for supposing that I'd ever dream of marrying again'—and I couldn't help kissing him once more and crying over him when I heard what he said. 'Now,' said he, 'kiss the book, and swear that you'll never put a ring on man after my death, and I'll leave you every shilling I'm worth.' God knows it was a trying scene to a loving heart like mine—so I swore that I'd never put a ring on man after his death —and then he altered his will and left me the property on those conditions."

"Proceed, madam," said the conjurer; "I am still in the dark as to the object of your visit."

"Why, sir, it is to know — ahem — O, poor old Paul. God forgive me! it was to know, sir, O ——"

"Don't cry, madam, don't cry."

"It was to know, sir, if I could ever think of—of

—you must know, sir, we had no family, and I would not wish that the property should die with me; to know if— if you think I could venture to marry again?"

"This," replied the conjurer, "is a matter of unusual importance and difficulty. In the first place you must hand me a guinea—that is my fee for cases of this kind."

The money was immediately paid, and the conjurer proceeded: "I said it was a case of great difficulty, and so it is, but ——"

"I forgot to mention, sir, that when I went out to get the prayer-book, I found Charley Mulvany in the next room, and he said he had one in his pocket; so that the truth, sir, is, I — I took the oath *upon a book of ballads.* Now," she proceeded, "I have strong reasons for marrying Charley Mulvany; and I wish to know if I can do so without losing the property."

"Make your mind easy on that point," replied the conjurer; "you swore never to put a ring on man, but you did not swear that a man would never put a ring on you. Go home," he continued, "and if you be advised by me, you will marry Charley Mulvany without loss of time."

A man rather advanced in years next came in, and taking his seat, wiped his face and gave a deep groan.

"Well, my friend," said the conjurer, "in what way can I serve you?"

"God knows it's hard to tell that," he replied — "but I'm troubled."

"What troubles you?"

"It's a quare world, sir, altogether."

"There are many strange things in it certainly."

"That's truth, sir; but the saison's favorable, thank God, and there's every prospect of a fine spring for puttin' down the crops."

"You are a farmer, then; but why should you fee troubled about what you call a fine season for putting down the crops?"

The man moved uneasily upon his chair, and seemed at a loss how to proceed; the conjurer looked at him, and waited for a little that he might allow him sufficient time to disclose his difficulties.

"There are a great many troubles in this life, sir, especially in married families."

"There is no doubt of that, my friend," replied the conjurer.

"No, sir, there is not. I am not aisy in my mind, somehow."

"Hundreds of thousands are so, as well as you," replied the other. "I would be glad to see the man who has not *something* to trouble him; but will you allow me to ask you what it is that troubles you?"

"I took her, sir, widout a shift to her back, and a betther husband never breathed the breath of life than I have been to her;" and then he paused, and pulling out his handkerchief, shed bitter tears. "I would love her still, if I could, sir; but, then, the thing's impossible."

"O, yes," said the conjurer; "I see you are jealous of her; but will you state upon what grounds?"

"Well, sir, I think I have good grounds for it."

"What description of a woman is your wife, and what age is she?"

"Why, sir, she's about my own age. She was once

handsome enough—indeed, very handsome when I married her."

"Was the marriage a cordial one between you and her?"

"Why, sir, she was dotin' upon me, as I was upon her."

"Have you had a family?"

"A fine family, sir, of sons and daughters."

"And how long is it since you began to suspect her?"

"Why, sir, I—I—well, no matther about that; she was always a good wife and a good mother, until—" Here he paused, and again wiped his eyes.

"Until what?"

"Why, sir, until Billy Fulton, the fiddler, came across her."

"Well, and what did Billy Fulton do?"

"He ran away wid my ould woman, sir."

"What age is Billy Fulton?"

"About my own age, sir; but by no means so stout a man; he's a dancin' masther, too, sir; and barrin' his pumps and white cotton stockin's, I don't know what she could see in him; he's a poor light crature, and walks as if he had a hump on his hip, for he always carries his fiddle undher his skirt. Ay, and what's more, sir, our daughter, Nancy, is gone off wid him."

"The devil she is. Why, did the old dancing-master run off with both of them? How long is it since this elopement took place?"

"Only three days, sir."

"And you wish me to assist you?"

"If you can, sir; and I ought to tell you that the vagabone's son is gone off wid them too."

"O, O," said the conjurer, "that makes the matter wcrse."

"No, it doesn't, sir, for what makes the matter worse is, that they took away a hundred and thirty pounds of my money along wid 'em."

"Then you wish to know what I can do for you in this business?"

"I do, sir, i' you plaise."

"Were you ever jealous of your wife before?"

"No, not exactly jealous, sir, but a little suspicious or so; I didn't think it safe to let her out much; I thought it no harm to keep my eye on her."

"Now," said the conjurer, "is it not notorious that you are the most jealous—by the way, give me five shillings; I can make no further communications till I am paid; there—thank you—now, is it not notorious that you are one of the most jealous old scoundrels in the whole country?"

"No, sir, barrin' a little wholesome suspicion."

"Well, sir, go home about your business. Your daughter and the dancing-master's son have made a runaway match of it, and your wife, to protect the character of her daughter, has gone with them. You are a miser, too. Go home, now; I have nothing more to say to you, except that you have been yourself a profligate. Look at that book, sir; there it is; the stars have told me so."

"You have got my five shillings, sir; but say what you like, all the wather in the ocean would'nt wash her clear of the ould dancin'-masther."

In the course of a few minutes a beautiful peasant girl entered the room, her face mantled with blushes, and took her seat on the chair as the others had done, and remained for some time silent, and apparently panting with agitation.

"What is your name, my pretty girl?" asked the conjurer.

"Grace Davoren," replied the girl.

"And what do you wish to know from me, Miss Davoren?"

"O, don't call me miss, sir; I'm but a poor girl."

The conjurer looked into his book for a few minutes, and then, raising his head, and fixing his eyes upon her, replied,—

"Yes, I will call you miss, because I have looked into your fate, and I see that there is great good fortune before you."

The young creature blushed again and smiled with something like confidence, but seemed rather at a loss what to say, or how to proceed.

"From your extraordinary beauty you must have a great many admirers, Miss Davoren."

"But only two, sir, that gives me any trouble—one of them is a ——"

The conjurer raised his hand as an intimation to her to stop, and after poring once more over the book for some time, proceeded:—

"Yes—one of them is *Shawn-na-Middogue*; but he's an outlaw—and that courtship is at an end now."

"Wid me, it is, sir; but not wid him. The sogers and autorities is out for him and others; but still he keeps watchin' me as close as he can."

"Well, wait till I look into the book of fate again —yes—yes—here is—*a gentleman* over head and ears in love with you."

Poor Grace blushed, then became quite pale. "But, sir," said she, "will the gentleman marry me?"

"To be sure he will marry you; but he cannot for some time."

"But will he save me from disgrace and shame, sir?" she asked, with a death-like face.

"Don't make your mind uneasy on that point;—but wait a moment till I find out his name in the great book of fatality;—yes, I see—his name is Woodward. Don't, however, make your mind uneasy; he will take care of you."

"My mind is very uneasy, sir, and I wish I had never seen him. But I don't know what could make him fall in love wid a poor simple girl like me."

This was said in the coquettish consciousness of the beauty which she knew she possessed, and it was accompanied, too, by a slight smile of self-complacency.

"Do you think I could become a lady, sir?"

"A lady! why, what is to prevent you? You are a lady already. You want nothing but silks and satins, jewels and gold rings, to make you a perfect lady."

"And he has promised all these to me," she replied.

"Yes; but there is one thing you ought to do for your own sake and his—and that is to betray *Shawna-Middogue*, if you can; because if you do not, neither your own life, nor that of your lover, Mr. Woodward, will be safe."

"I could'nt do that, sir," replied the girl; "it would be treacherous; and sooner than do so, I'd just as soon

he would kill me at wanst—still I would do a great deal to save Mr. Woodward. But will Mr. Woodward marry me, sir? because he said he would—in the coorse of some time."

"And if he said so don't be uneasy; he is a gentleman, and a gentleman, you know, always keeps his word. Don't be alarmed, my pretty girl—your lover will provide for you."

"Am I to pay you anything, sir?" she asked, rising.

"No, my dear, I will take no money from you; but if you wish to save Mr. Woodward from danger, you will enable the soldiers to arrest *Shawn-na-Middogue*. Even you, yourself, are not safe so long as he is at large."

She then took her leave in silence.

It is not to be supposed that among the crowd that was assembled around the inn door there were not a number of waggish characters, who felt strongly inclined to have, if possible, a hearty laugh at the great conjurer. No matter what state of society may exist, or what state of feeling may prevail, there will always be found a class of persons who are exceptions to the general rule. Whilst the people were chatting in wonder and admiration, not without awe and fear, concerning the extraordinary knowledge and power of the conjurer, a character peculiar to all times and all ages made his appearance, and soon joined them. This was one of those circulating, unsettled vagabonds, whom, like scum, society, whether agitated or not, is always sure to throw on the surface. The comical miscreant no sooner made his appearance than, like Liston, when

coming on the stage, he was greeted with a general roar of laughter.

"So," said he, "you have a conjurer above. But wait a while; by the powdhers o' delf Rantin' Rody's the boy will try his mettle. If he can look farther than his nose, I'm the lad will find it out. If he doesn't say I'll be hanged, he knows nothing about his business. I have myself half-a-dozen hangmen engaged to let me down aisy; it's a death I've a great fancy for, and, plaise God, I'm workin' honestly to desarve it. Which of you has a cow to steal? for, by the sweets o' rosin, I'm low in cash, and want a thrifle to support nather; for nather, my boys, must be supported, and it was never my intintion to die for want o' my vittles; aitin' and drinkin' is not very pleasant to most people, I know, but I was born wid a fancy for both."

"Rantin' Rody, in airnest, will you go up and have your fortune tould?"

"But wait," he proceeded; "wait, I say,—wait,—I have it." And as he said so he went at the top of his speed down the street, and disappeared in Sol Donnel's cabin.

"By this and by that," said one of them, "Rantin' Rody will take spunk out of him, if it's in him."

"I think he had better have notin' to do wid him," said an old woman, "for fraid he'd *rise* the devil—Lord guard us! Sure it's the same man that was in this very town the night he was *riz* before, and that the bonfire for Suil Balor (the eye of Balor, or the *Evil Eye*) Woodward was drowned by a shower of blood. Troth I wouldn't be in the same Woodward's coat for the wealth o' the world. As for Rantin' Rody, let him

take care of himself. It's never safe to sport wid edged tools, and he'll be apt to find it so, if he attempts to put his tricks upon the conjurer."

In the meantime, while that gentleman was seated above stairs, a female, tall, slim, and considerably advanced in years, entered the room and took her seat. Her face was thin, and red in complexion, especially about the point of a rather long nose, where the color appeared to be considerably deeper in hue.

"Sir," said she, in a sharp tone of voice, "I'm told you can tell fortunes."

"Certainly, madam," he replied, "you have been correctly informed."

"You won't be offended, then, if I wish to ask you a question or two. It's not about myself, but a sister of mine, who is—ahem—what the censorious world is pleased to call an old maid."

"Why did your sister not come herself?" he asked; "I cannot predict anything unless the individual is before me; I must have him or her, as the case may be, under my eye."

"Bless me, sir! I didn't know that; but as I am now here—could you tell me anything about myself?"

"I could tell you many things," replied the conjurer, who read old maid in every line of her face — "many things not very pleasant for you to reflect upon."

"O, but I don't wish to hear anything unpleasant," said she; "tell me something that's agreeable."

"In the first place, I cannot do so," he replied; "I

must be guided by truth. You have, for instance, been guilty of great cruelty; and although you are but a young woman, in the very bloom of life ——"

Here the lady bowed to him, and simpered — her thin, red nose twisted into a gracious curl, as thanking him for his politeness.

"In the very prime of life, madam — yet you have much to be accountable for, in consequence of your very heartless cruelty to the male sex — you see, madam, and you feel, too, that I speak truth."

The lady put the spectre of an old fan up to her withered visage, and pretended to enact a blush of admission.

"Well, sir," she replied, "I — I — I cannot say but that — indeed I have been charged with — not that it — cruelty — I mean — was ever in my heart; but you must admit, sir, that — that — in fact — where too many press upon a person, it is the more difficult to choose."

"Unquestionably; but you should have made a judicious selection — and that was because you were in no hurry — and indeed you need not be; you have plenty of time before you. Still, there is much blame attached to you — you have defrauded society of its rights. Why, now, you might have been the proud mother of a son or daughter at least five years old by this time, if it had not been for your own obduracy — excuse me."

Up went the skeleton fan again with a wonderfully modest if not an offended simper at the notion of such an insinuation; but, said she in her heart, this is the most gentlemanly conjurer that ever told a

fortune; quite a delightful old gentleman; he is really charming; I wish I had met him twenty years ago.

"Well, sir," she replied, "I see there is no use in denying — especially *to you*, who seem to know everything — the truth of the facts you have stated. There was one gentleman in particular whom I rejected — that is, conditionally — rather harshly; and do you know, he took the scarlet-fever soon afterwards and died of a broken heart."

"Go on, madam," said he; "make a clean breast of it —so shall you enable me to compare the future with the past, and state your coming fortunes more distinctly."

"Another gentleman, sir—a country squire — owes, I fear, his death to my severity; he was a hard drinker, but I gave him a month to reform — which sentence he took so much to heart that he broke his neck in a fox-chase from mere despair. A third individual — a very handsome young man — of whom I must confess I was a little jealous about his flirting with another young lady — felt such remorse that he absolutely ran away with and married her. I know, of course, I am accountable for all these calamities; but it cannot be helped now — my conscience must bear it."

"You should not look back upon these things with too much remorse," replied the conjurer; "forget them — bear a more relenting heart; make some man happy, and marry. Have you no person at present in your eye with whom you could share your charms and your fortune?"

"O, sir, you are complimentary."

"Not at all, madam; speak to me candidly, as you perceive I do to you."

"Well, then," she replied, "there is a young gentleman with whom I should wish to enter into a—a domestic—that is—a matrimonial connection."

"Pray what age is he?"

"Indeed, he is but young, scarce nineteen; but then he is very wild, and I—I—have—indeed I am of too kind a heart, sir. I have supplied his extravagance—for so I must call it—poor boy—but cannot exactly get him to accept a legitimate right over me—I fear he is attached elsewhere—but you know he is young, sir, and not come to his ripe judgment yet. I read your handbill, sir; and if you could furnish me with a—something—ehem—that might enable me to gain, or rather to restore his affections—for I think he was fond of me some few months ago—I would not grudge whatever the payment might be."

"You mean a philter?"

"I believe that is what it is called, sir."

"Well, madam, you shall be supplied with a philter that never fails, on the payment of twenty-one shillings. This, philter, madam, will not only make him fond of you before marriage, but will secure his affections during life, increasing them day by day, so that every month of your lives will be a delicious honeymoon. There is another bottle at the same price; it may not, indeed, be necessary for you, but I can assure you that it has made many families happy where there had been previously but little prospect of happiness; the price is the same—twenty-one shillings."

Up went the spectral fan again, and out came the forty-two shillings, and, with a formal courtesy, the venerable old maid walked away with the two bottles of *aqua pura* in her pocket.

Now came the test for the conjurer's knowledge—the sharp and unexpected trial of his skill and sagacity. After the old maid had taken her leave, possessed of the two bottles, a middle-aged, large-sized woman walked in, and, after making a low courtesy, sat down as she had been desired. The conjurer glanced keenly at her, and something like a smile might be seen to settle upon his features; it was so slight, however, that the good woman did not notice it.

"Pray, what's the object of your visit to me, may I ask?"

"My husband, sir—he runn'd away from me, sure."

"Small blame to him," replied the conjurer. "If I had such a wife I would not remain a single hour in her company."

"And is that the tratement you give a heart-broken and desarted crature, like me?"

"Come, what made him run away from you?"

"In regard, sir, of a dislike he took to me."

"That was a proof that the man had some taste."

"Ay, but why hadn't he that taste afore he married me?"

"It was very well that he had it afterwards—better late than never."

"I want you to tell me where he is."

"What family have you?"

"Seven small childre that's now fatherless, I may say."

"What kind of a man was your husband?"

"Why, indeed, as handsome a vagabone as you'd see in a day's travellin'."

"Mention his name; I can tell you nothing till I hear it."

"He's called Rantin' Rody, the thief, and a great schamer he is among the girls."

"Ranting Rody—let me see," and here he looked very solemnly into his book—"yes; I see—a halter. My good woman, you had better not inquire after him; he was born to be hanged."

"But when will that happen, sir?"

"Your fate and his are so closely united, that, whenever he swings, you will swing. You will both hang together from the same gallows; so that, in point of fact, you need not give yourself much trouble about the time of his suspension, because I see it written here in the book of fate, that the same hangman who swings you off, will swing him off at the same moment. You'll die lovingly together; and when he puts his tongue out at those who will attend his execution, so will you; and when he dances his last jig in their presence, so will you. Are you now satisfied?"

"Troth and I'm very fond o' the vagabone, although he's the worst friend I ever had. But you won't tell me where he is? and I know why, because, with all your pretended knowledge, the devil a know you know."

"Are you sure of that?"

"Ay, cocksure."

"Then I can tell you that he is sitting on the chair there, opposite me. Go about your business, Rody, and rant elsewhere; you may impose upon others, but not upon a man that can penetrate the secrets of human life as I can. Go now; there is a white wand in the

corner, — my conjuring rod,—and if I only touched you with it, I could leave you a cripple and beggar for life. Go, I say, and tell Caterine Collins how much she and you gained by this attempt at disgracing me."

Rody, for it was he, was thunderstruck at this discovery, and, springing to his feet, disappeared.

"Well, Rody," said the crowd, "how did you manage? Did he know you?"

Rody was as white in the face as a sheet. "Let me alone," he replied; "the conjurer above is the devil, and nothin' else. I must get a glass o' whiskey; I'm near faintin'; I'm as wake as a child; my strength's gone. The man, or the devil, or whatsomever he is, knows everything, and, what is worse, he tould me I am to be hanged in earnest."

"Faith, Rody, that required no great knowledge on his part; there's not a man here but could have tould you the same thing, and there's none of us a conjurer."

Rody, however, immediately left them to discuss the matter among themselves, and went, thoroughly crestfallen, to give an account of his mission to Caterine Collins, who had employed him, and to reassume his own clothes, which, indeed, were by no means fresh from the tailor.

The last individual whose interview with the conjurer we shall notice was no other than Harry Woodward, our hero. On entering he took his seat, and looked familiarly at the conjurer.

"Well," said he, "there was no recognition?"

"How could there?" replied the other; "you know the thing's impossible; even without my beard, nobody in the town or about it knows my face, and to those

who see me in character, they have other things to think of than the perusal of my features."

"The girl was with you?"

"She was, and I fear that, unless we can get *Shawnna-Middogue* taken off by some means or other, your life will not, cannot, be safe."

"She won't betray him, then? But I need not ask, for I have pressed her upon that matter before."

"She is very right in not doing so," replied the conjurer; "because, if she did, the consequence would be destruction to herself and her family. In addition to this, however, I don't think it's in her power to betray him. He never sleeps more than one night in the same place; and since her recent conduct to him — I mean since her intimacy with you — he would place no confidence in her."

"He certainly is not aware of our intimacy."

"Of course he is not; you would soon know it to your cost if he were. The place of your rendezvous is somewhat too near civilization for him; you should, however, change it; never meet twice in the same place, if you can."

"You are reaping a tolerably good harvest here, I suppose. Do they ever place you in a difficulty?"

"Difficulty! God help you; there is not an individual among them, or throughout the whole parish, with whose persons, circumstances, and characters I am not acquainted; but even if it were not so, I could make them give me unconsciously the very information they want—returned to them, of course, in a new shape. I make them state the facts, and I draw the inferences; nothing is easier; it is a trick that every

imposter is master of. How do you proceed with Miss Goodwin?"

"That matter is hopeless by fair means—she's in love with that d——d brother of mine."

"No chance of the property, then?"

"Not as affairs stand at present; we must, however maintain our intimacy; if so, I won't despair yet.'

"But what do you intend to do? If she marries your brother the property goes to him—and you may go whistle."

"I don't give it up, though—I bear a brain still, I, think; but the truth is, I have not completed my plan of operations. What I am to do, I know not yet exactly. If I could break off the match between her and my brother, she might probably, through the influence of her parents and other causes, be persuaded into a reluctant marriage with Harry Woodward; time, however, will tell, and I must only work my way through the difficulty as well as I can. I will now leave you, and I don't think I shall be able to see you again for a week to come."

"Before you go let me ask if you know a vagabond called Ranting Rody, who goes about through the country living no one knows how?"

"No, I do not know him; what is he?"

"He's nothing except a paramour of Caterine Collins's, who, you know, is a rival of ours; nobody here knows anything about him, whilst he, it appears, knows every one and everything."

"He would make a good conjuror," replied Woodward, smiling.

"If the fellow could be depended upon," replied the

other, "he might be useful; in fact, I am of opinion that if he wished he could trace *Shawn-na-Middogue's* haunts. The scoundrel attempted just now to impose upon me in the dress of a woman, and, were it not that I knew him so well, he might have got my beard stripped from my face, and my bones broken besides; but I feel confident that if any one could trace and secure the outlaw, he could—I mean with proper assistance. Think of this."

"I shall find him out," replied Woodward, "and sound him, at all events, and I think through Caterine Collins I may possibly secure him; but we must be cautious. Good-by; I wish you success.

After which he passed through the crowd, exclaiming, "A wonderful man—an astonishing man—and a fearful man; that is, if he *be* a man, which I very much doubt."

CHAPTER XII.

FORTUNE-TELLING.

Ever since the night of the bonfire Woodward's character became involved more or less in a mystery that was peculiar to the time and the superstitions of the period. That he possessed the Evil Eye was whispered about; and what was still more strange, it was not his wish that such rumors should be suppressed. They had not yet, however, reached either Alice Goodwin or her parents. In the meantime the feelings of the two families were once more suspended in a kind of neutral opposition, each awaiting the other to make

the first advance. Poor Alice, however, appeared rather declining in health and spirits, for, notwithstanding her firm and generous defence of Charles Lindsay, his brother, to a certain extent, succeeded in shaking her confidence in his attachment. Her parents frequently asked her the cause of her apparent melancholy, but she only gave them evasive replies, and stated that she had not felt herself very well since Henry Woodward's last interview with her.

They now urged her to take exercise—against which, indeed, she always had a constitutional repugnance—and not to sit so much in her own room as she did; and in order to comply with their wishes in this respect, she forced herself to walk a couple of hours each day in the lawn, where she generally read a book, for the purpose, if possible, of overcoming her habitual melancholy. It was upon one of these occasions that she saw the fortune-teller, Caterine Collins, approach her, and as her spirits were unusually depressed at the moment, she felt no inclination to enter into any conversation with her. Naturally courteous, however, and reluctant to give offence, she allowed the woman to advance, especially as she could perceive from the earnestness of her manner that she was anxious to speak with her.

"Well, Caterine," said she "I hope you are not coming to tell my fortune to-day; I am not in spirits to hear much of the future, be it good or bad. Will you not go up to the house? They will give you something to eat."

"Thank you, Miss Alice, I will go up by and by; but in the manetime, what fortune could any one tell

you but good fortune? There's nothin' else before you; and if there is, I'm come to put you on your guard against it, as I will, plaise goodness. I heard what I'm goin' to mention to you on good autority, and, as I know it's true, I think it's but right you should know of it, too."

Alice immediately became agitated; but mingled with that agitation was a natural wish—perhaps it might be a pardonable curiosity, under the circumstances—to hear how what the woman had to disclose could affect herself. Being nervous, restless, and depressed, she was just in the very frame of mind to receive such an impression as might be deeply prejudicial to the ease of her heart—perhaps her happiness, and consequently her health.

"What is it that you think I should know, Caterine?"

Caterine, who looked about her furtively, as if to satisfy herself that there was no one present but themselves, said—

"Now, Miss Goodwin, everything depends on whether you'll answer me one question truly, and you need'nt be afeard to spake the truth to me."

"Is it concerning myself?"

"It is, Miss Goodwin, and another, too, but principally yourself."

"But what right have you, Caterine, to question me upon my own affairs?"

"No right, miss; but I wish to prevent you from harm."

"I thank you for your good wishes, Caterine; but what is it you would say?"

"Is it true, Miss Alice, that you and Mr. Woodward are coortin'?"

"It is *not*, Caterine," replied Alice, uttering the disavowal with a good deal of earnestness; "there is no truth whatsoever in it; nothing can be more false and groundless—I wonder how such a rumor could have got abroad; it certainly could not proceed from Mr. Woodward."

"It did not, indeed, Miss Alice; but it did from his brother, who, it seems, is very fond of him, and said he was glad of it; but indeed, miss, it delights my heart to hear that there is no truth in it. Mr. Woodward, God save us! is no fit husband for any Christian woman."

"Why so?" asked Alice, laboring under some vague sense of alarm.

"Why, Heavenly Father! Miss Alice, sure it's well known he has the Evil Eye; it's in the family upon his mother's side."

"My God!" exclaimed Alice, who became instantly as pale as death, "if that be true, Caterine, it's shocking."

"True," replied Caterine; "did you never observe his eyes?"

"Not particularly."

"Did you remark that they're of different colors? that one of them is as black as the devil's, and the other a gray?"

"I never observed that," replied Alice, who really never had.

"Yes, and I could tell you more than that about him;" proceeded Caterine; they say he's connected

wid what's not good. Sure, when they got up a bonfire for him, does'nt all the world know that it was put out by a shower of blood; and that's a proof that he's a favorite wid the devil and the fairies."

"I believe," replied Alice, "that there is no doubt whatsoever about the shower of blood; but I should not consider that fact as proof that he is a favorite with either the devil or the fairies."

"Ay, but you don't know, miss, that *that's* the way *they* have of showin' it. Then, ever since he has come to the country, Bet Harramount, the witch, in the shape of a white hare, is come back to the neighborhood, and the *Shawn-dhinne-dhuv* is now seen about the Haunted House oftener than he ever was. It's well known that the white hare plays about Mr. Woodward like a dog, and that she goes into the Haunted House, too, every night."

"And what brought you to tell me all this, Caterine?" asked Alice.

"Why, miss, to put you on your guard; afraid you might get married to a man that, maybe, has sould himself to the devil. It's well known by his father's sarvints that he's out two or three nights in the week, and nobody can tell where he goes."

"Are the servants your authority for that?"

"Indeed they are; Barney Casey knows a great deal about him. Now, Miss Alice, you're on your guard; have nothing to do wid him as a sweetheart; but above all things don't fall out wid him, bekaise, if you did, as sure as I stand here he'd wither you off o' the earth. And above all things again watch his eyes; I mane the black one, but don't seem to do so;

and now good by, miss; I've done my duty to you."

"But about his brother, Caterine? He has not the Evil Eye, I hope?"

"Ah, miss, I could tell you something about him, too. They're a bad graft, these Lindsays; there's Mr. Charles, and its whispered he's goin' to make a fool of himself and disgrace his family."

"How is that, Caterine?"

"I don't know rightly; I didn't hear the particulars; but I'll be on the watch, and when I can I'll let you know it."

"Take no such trouble, Caterine," said Alice; "I assure you I feel no personal interest whatsoever in, any of the family except Miss Lindsay. Leave me, Caterine, leave me; I must finish my book: but I thank you for your good wishes. Go up, and say I desired them to give you your dinner."

Alice soon felt herself obliged to follow; and it was indeed, with some difficulty she was able to reach the house. Her heart got deadly sick; an extraordinary weakness came over her; she became alarmed, frightened, distressed; her knees tottered under her, and she felt on reaching the hall-door as if she were about to faint. Her imagination became disturbed; a heavy, depressing gloom descended upon her, and darkened her flexible and unresisting spirit, as if it were the forebodings of some terrible calamity. The diabolical wretch who had just left her took care to perform her base and heartless task with double effect. It was not merely the information she had communicated concerning Woodward that affected her so deeply, although she

felt, as it were, in the inmost recesses of her soul, that it was true, but that which went at the moment with greater agony to her heart was the allusion to Charles Lindsay, and the corroboration it afforded to the truth of the charge which Woodward had brought, with so much apparent reluctance, against him—the charge of having neglected and abandoned her for another, and that other a person of low birth, who, by relinquishing her virtue, had contrived to gain such an artful and selfish ascendency over him. How could she doubt it? Here was a woman ignorant of the communication Woodward had made to her,—ignorant of the vows that had passed between them,—who had heard of his falsehood and profligacy, and who never would have alluded to them had she not been questioned. So far, then, Woodward, she felt, stood without blame with respect to his brother. And how could she suspect Caterine to have been the agent of that gentleman, when she knew now that her object in seeking an interview with herself was to put her on her guard against him? The case was clear, and, to her, dreadful as it was clear. She felt herself now, however, in that mood which no sympathy can alleviate or remove. She experienced no wish to communicate her distress to any one, but resolved to preserve the secret in her own bosom. Here, then, was she left to suffer the weight of a twofold affliction—the dread of Woodward, with which Caterine's intelligence had filled her heart, feeble, and timid, and credulous as it was upon any subject of a superstitious tendency —and the still deeper distress which weighed her down in consequence of Charles Lindsay's treachery

and dishonor. Alas! poor Alice's heart was not one for struggles, nurtured and bred up, as she had been, in the very wildest spirit of superstition, in all its degrading ramifications. There was something in the imagination and constitution of the poor girl which generated and cherished the superstitions which prevailed in her day. She could not throw them off her mind, but dwelt upon them with a kind of fearful pleasure which we can understand from those which operated upon our own fancies in our youth. These prepare the mind for the reception of a thousand fictions concerning ghosts, witches, fairies, apparitions, and a long catalogue of nonsense, equally disgusting and repugnant to reason and common-sense. It is not surprising, then, that poor Alice's mind on that night was filled with phantasms of the most feverish and excited description. As far as she could, however, she concealed her agitation from her parents, but not so successfully as to prevent them from perceiving that she was laboring under some extraordinary and unaccountable depression. This unfortunately was too true. On that night she experienced a series of such wild and frightful visions as, when she was startled out of them, made her dread to go again to sleep. The white hare, the Black Spectre, but, above all, the fearful expression her alarmed fancy had felt in Woodward s eye, which was rivited upon her, she thought, with a baleful and demoniacal glance, that pierced and prostrated her spirit with its malignant and supernatural power; all these terrible images, with fifty other incoherent chimeras, flitted before the wretched girl's imagination during her feverish slumbers. Towards

morning she sank into a somewhat calmer state of rest, but still with occasional and flitting glimpses of the same horrors.

So far the master-spirit had set, at least, a portion of his machinery in motion, in order to work out his purposes; but we shall find that his designs became deeper and blacker as he proceeded in his course.

In a few days Alice became somewhat relieved from the influence of these tumultuous and spectral phantasms which had run riot in her terrified fancy; and this was principally owing to the circumstance of her having prevailed upon one of the maid-servants, a girl named Bessy Mangan, Barney Casey's sweetheart, to sleep privately in her room. The attack had reduced and enfeebled her very much, but still she was slightly improved and somewhat relieved in her spirits. The shock, and the nervous paroxysm that accompanied it, had nearly passed away, and she was now anxious, for the sake of her health, to take as much exercise as she could. Still—still—the two leading thoughts would occur to her—that of Charles's treachery, and the terrible gift or curse, possessed by his brother Henry; and once more her heart would sink to the uttermost depths of distress and terror. The supernatural, however, in the course of a little time, prevailed, as it was only reasonable to suppose it would in such a temperament as hers; and as her mind proceeded to struggle with the two impressions, she felt that her dread of Woodward was gradually gaining upon and absorbing the other. Her fear of him, consequently, was deadly; that terrible and malignant eye—notwithstanding its dark brilliancy and awful

beauty, alas! too, significant of its power—was constantly before her imagination, gazing upon her with a fixed, determined, and mysterious look, accompanied by a smile of triumph, which deepened its *satanity*, if we may be allowed to coin a word, at every glance. It was not mere antipathy she felt for him now, but dread and horror. How, then, was she to act? She had pledged herself to receive his visits upon one condition, and to permit him to continue a friendly intimacy altogether apart from love. How, then, could she violate her word, or treat him with rudeness, who had always not only treated *her* with courtesy, but expressed an interest in her happiness which she had every reason to believe sincere? Thus was the poor girl entangled with difficulties on every side without possessing any means of releasing herself from them.

In a few days after this she was sitting in the drawing-room when Woodward unexpectedly entered it, and saluted her with great apparent good feeling and politeness. The surprise caused her to become as pale as death; she felt her very limbs relax with weakness, and her breath for a few moments taken away from her; she looked upon him with an expression of alarm and fear which she could not conceal, and it was with some difficulty that she was at length enabled to speak.

"You will excuse me, sir," she said, "for not rising; I am very nervous, and have not been at all well for the last week or upwards."

"Indeed, Miss Goodwin, I am very sorry to hear this; I trust it is only a mere passing indisposition; I think the complaint is general, for my sister has also

been ailing much the same way for the last few days. Don't be alarmed, Miss Goodwin, it is nothing, and won't signify. You should mingle more in society; you keep too much alone."

"But I do not relish society; I never mingle in it that I don't feel exhausted and depressed."

"That certainly makes a serious difference; in such a case, then, I imagine society would do you more harm than good. I should not have intruded on you had not your mother requested me to come up and try to raise your spirits—a pleasure which I would gladly enjoy if I could."

"I am much obliged to you, Mr. Woodward," she replied; "I hope a short time will remove this unusual depression, and I must only have a little patience."

"Just so, Miss Goodwin; a little time, as you say, will restore you to yourself."

Now all this was very courteous and kind of Mr. Woodward, and *might* have raised her spirits were it not for the *eye*. From the moment he entered the apartment that dreaded instrument of his power was fixed upon her with a look so concentrated, piercing and intense, that it gave a character of abstraction to all he said. In other words, she felt as if his language proceeded out of his lips unconsciously, and that some mysterious purport of his heart emanated from his eye. It appeared to her that he was thinking of something secret connected with herself, to which his words bore no reference whatsoever. She neither knew what to do nor what to say under this terrible and permeating gaze; it was in vain she turned away her eyes; she

knew—she felt—that his was upon her—that it was drinking up her strength—that, in fact, the evil influence was mingling with and debilitating her frame, and operating upon all her faculties. There was still, however, a worse symptom, and one which gave that gaze a significance that appalled her—this was the smile of triumph which she had seen playing coldly but triumphantly about his lips in her dreams. That smile was the feather to the arrow that pierced her, and that was piercing her at that moment—it was the cold but glittering glance of the rattlesnake, when breaking down by the poison of his eyes the power of resistance in his devoted victim.

"Mr. Woodward," said she, after a long pause, "I am unable to bear an interview—have the goodness to withdraw, and when you go down stairs send my mother up. Excuse me, sir; but you must perceive how very ill I have got within a few minutes."

"I regret it, exceedingly, Miss Goodwin. I had something to mention to you respecting that unfortunate brother of mine; but you are not now in a condition to hear anything unpleasant and distressing; and, indeed, it is better, I think, now that I observe your state of health, that you should not even wish to hear it."

"I never do wish to hear it, sir; but have the goodness to leave me."

"I trust my next visit will find you better. Good-by, Miss Goodwin! I shall send your mother up."

He withdrew very much after the etiquette of a subject leaving a crowned head—that is, nearly backwards; but when he came to the door he paused a moment, turning upon her one long, dark, inexplicable

gaze, whilst the muscles of his hard, stony mouth were drawn back with a smile that contained in its expression a spirit that might be considered complacent, but which Alice interpreted as derisive and diabolical.

"Mamma," said she, when her mother joined her, "I am ill, and I know not what to do."

"I know you are not well, my love," replied her mother, "but I hope you're not worse; how do you feel?"

"Quite feeble, utterly without strength, and dreadfully depressed and alarmed."

"Alarmed, Alley! Why, what could alarm you, Does not Mr. Woodward always conduct himself as a gentleman?"

"He does, ma'am; but, nevertheless, I never wish to see him again."

"Why, dear me! Alice, is it reasonable that you should give way to such a prejudice against that gentleman? Indeed I believe you absolutely hate him."

"It is not personal hatred, mother; it is fear and terror. I do not, as I said, hate the man personally, because I must say that he never deserved such a feeling at my hands, but, in the meantime, the sight of him sickens me almost to death. I am not aware that he is or ever was immoral, or guilty of any act that ought to expose him to hatred; but, notwithstanding that, my impression, when conversing with him, is, that I am in the presence of an evil spirit, or of a man who is possessed of one. Mamma, he must be excluded the house, and forbidden to visit here again, otherwise my health will be destroyed, and my very life placed in danger.'

"My dear Alice, that is all very strange," replied her mother, now considerably alarmed at her language, but still more so at her appearance ; "why, God bless me, child! now that I look at you, you certainly do seem to be in an extraordinary state. You are the color of death, and then you are all trembling! Why is this, I ask again?"

"The presence of that man," she replied, in a faint voice ; "his presence simply and solely. That is what has left me as you see me."

"Well, Alice, it is very odd and very strange, and it seems as if there was some mystery in it. I will, however, talk to your father about it, and we will hear what he shall say. In the meantime, raise your spirits, and don't be so easily alarmed. You are naturally nervous and timid, and this is merely a poor, cowardly conceit that has got into your head ; but your own good sense will soon show you the folly of yielding to a mere fancy. Amuse yourself on the spinet, and play some brisk music that will cheer your spirits ; it is nothing but the spleen."

Woodward, in the meantime, having effected his object, and satisfied himself of his power over Alice, pursued his way home in high spirits. To his utter astonishment, however, he found the family in an uproar, the cause of which we will explain. His mother, whose temper neither she herself nor any other human being, unless her husband, when provoked too far, could keep under anything like decent restraint, had got into a passion, while he, Woodward, was making his visit ; and while in a blaze of resentment against the Goodwins she disclosed the secret of his rejection by Alice,

and dwelt with bitter indignation upon the attachment she had avowed for Charles—a secret which Henry had most dishonorably intrusted to her, but which, as the reader sees, she had neither temper nor principle to keep.

On entering the house he found his mother and stepfather at high feud. The brows of the latter were knit, as was always the case when he found himself bent on mischief. He was calm, however, which was another bad sign, for in him the old adage was completely reversed, "*After* a storm comes a calm," whilst in his case it uniformly preceded it.

Woodward looked about him with amazement; his stepfather was standing with his back to the parlor fire, holding the skirts of his coat divided behind, whilst his wife stood opposite to him, her naturally red face still flaming more deeply with a tornado of indignation.

"And you dare to tell me that you'll consent to Charles's marriage with her?"

"Yes, my dear, I dare to tell you so. You had no objection that she should marry your son Harry there. You forgot or dissembled your scorn and resentment against her, when you thought you could make a catch of her property: a very candid and disinterested proceeding on your part. Well, what's the consequence? That's all knocked up; the girl won't have him, because she is attached to his brother, and because his brother is attached to her. Now, that is just as it ought to be, and, please God, we'll have them married. And I now take the liberty of asking you both to the wedding."

"Lindsay, you're an offensive old dog, sir."

"I might retort the compliment by changing the sex, my dear," he replied, laughing and nodding at her, with a face, from the nose down, rather benevolent than otherwise, but still the knit was between the brows.

"Lindsay, you're an unmanly villain, and a coward to boot, or you would'nt use such language to a woman."

"Not to a woman; but I'm sometimes forced to do so to a termagant."

"What's the cause of all this?" inquired Woodward; "upon my honor, the language I hear is very surprising, as coming from a justice of quorum and his lady. Fie! fie! I am ashamed of you both. In what did it originate?"

"Why, the fact is, Harry, she has told us that Alice Goodwin, in the most decided manner, has rejected your addresses, and confided to you an avowal of her attachment to Charles here. Now, when I heard this, I felt highly delighted at it, and said we should have them married, and so we shall. Then your mother, in flaming indignation at this, enacted Vesuvius in a blaze, and there she stands ready for another eruption."

"I wish you were in the bottom of Vesuvius, Lindsay; but you shall not have your way, notwithstanding."

"So I am, my dear, every day in my life. I have a little volcano of my own here, under the very roof with me; and I tell that volcano that I will have my own way in this matter, and that this marriage must take place if Alice is willing; and I'm sure she is, the dear girl."

"Sir," said Woodward, addressing his stepfather calmly, "I feel a good deal surprised that a thinking man, of a naturally sedate temper, as you are"——

"Yes, Harry, I am so."

"Of such a sedate temper as you are, should not recollect the possibility of my mother, who sometimes takes up impressions hastily, if not erroneously—as the calmest of us too frequently do—of my mother, I say, considerably mistaking and unconsciously misrepresenting the circumstances I mentioned to her."

"But why did you mention them exclusively to her?" asked Charles; "I cannot see your object in concealing them from the rest of the family, especially from those who were most interested in the knowledge of them."

"Simply because I had nothing actually decisive to mention. I principally confined myself to my own inferences, which unfortunately my mother, with her eager habit of snatching at conclusions, in this instance, mistook for facts. I shall satisfy you, Charles, of this, and of other matters besides; but we will require time."

"I assure you, Harry, that if your mother does not keep her temper within some reasonable bounds, either she or I shall leave the house—and I am not likely to be the man to do so."

"This house is mine, Lindsay, and the property is mine—both in my own right; and you and your family may leave it as soon as you like,"

"But you forget that I have property enough to support myself and them independently of you."

"Wherever you go, my dear papa," said Maria,

bursting into tears, "I will accompany you. I admit it is a painful determination for a daughter to be forced to make against her own mother; but it is one I should have died sooner than come to if she had *ever* treated me as a daughter."

Her good-natured and affectionate father took her in his arms and kissed her.

"My own darling Maria," said he, "I could forgive your mother all her domestic violence and outrage had she acted with the affection of a mother towards you. She has a heart only for one individual, and that is her son Harry, there."

"As for me," said Charles, "wherever my father goes, I, too, my dear Maria, will accompany him."

"You hear that, Harry," said Mrs. Lindsay; "you see now they are in a league—in a conspiracy against your happiness and mine;—but think of their selfishness and cunning—it is the girl's property they want."

"Perish the property," exclaimed Charles, indignantly. "I will now mention a fact which I have hitherto never breathed—Alice Goodwin and I were, I may say, betrothed before ever she dreamed of possessing it; and if I held back since that time, I did so from the principles of a man of honor, lest she might imagine that I renewed our intimacy, after the alienations of the families, from mercenary motives."

"You're a fine fellow, Charley," said his father: "you're a fine fellow, and you deserve her and her property, if it was ten times what it is."

"Don't you be disheartened, Harry," said his mother; "I have a better wife in my eye for you—

a wife that will bring you connection, and that is Lord Bilberry's niece."

"Yes," said her husband, ironically; "a man with fifty thousand acres of mountain. Faith, Harry, you will be a happy man, and may feed on bilberries all your life; but upon little else, unless you can pick the spare bones of an old maid who has run herself into an asthma in the unsuccessful sport of husband-hunting."

"She will inherit her uncle's property, Lindsay."

"Yes, she will inherit the heather and the bilberries. But go in God's name; work out that project; there is nobody here disposed to hinder you. Only I hope you will ask us to the wedding."

"Mother," said Woodward, affectionately taking her hand and giving it a significant squeeze; "mother you must excuse me for what I am about to say"—another squeeze, and a glance which *she* very well understood—"upon my honor, mother, I must give my verdict *for the present*"—another squeeze—"against you. You *must* be kinder to Charles and Maria, and you *must not* treat *my father* with such disrespect and harshness. I wish to become a mediator and pacificator in the family. As for myself, I care not about property; I wish to marry the girl I love. I am not, I trust, a selfish man—God forbid I should; but *for the present*"—another squeeze—"let me entreat you all to forget this little breeze; urge nothing; precipitate nothing; a little time, perhaps, if we have patience to wait, may restore us all, and everything else we are quarrelling about, to peace and happiness. Charles, I wish to have some conversation with you."

"Harry," said Lindsay, "I am glad you have spoken

as you did; your words do you credit, and your conduct is manly and honorable."

"I do believe, indeed," said his unsuspecting brother, "that the best thing we could all do would be to put ourselves under his guidance; as for my part I am perfectly willing to do so, Harry. After hearing the good sense you have just uttered, I think you are entitled to every confidence from us all."

"You overrate my abilities, Charles; but not, I hope, the goodness of an affectionate heart that loves you all. Charles, come with me for a few minutes; and, mother, do you also expect a private lecture from me by and by?"

"Well," said the mother, "I suppose I must. If I were only spoken to kindly I could feel as kindly; however, let there be an end to this quarrel as the boy says, and I, as well as Charles, shall be guided by his advice."

"Now, Charles," said he, when they had gone to another room, "you know what kind of a woman my mother is; and the truth is, until matters get settled, we will have occasion for a good deal of patience with her; let us, therefore, exercise it. Like most hot-tempered women, she has a bad memory, and wrests the purport of words too frequently to a wrong meaning. In the account she gave you of what occurred between Alice Goodwin and me, she entirely did."

"But what *did* occur between Alice Goodwin and you, Harry?"

"A very few words will tell it. She admitted that there certainly has been an attachment between you and her, but—that—that—I will not exactly repeat

her words, although I don't say they were meant offensively; but it amounted to this, that she now filled a different position in the eyes of the world; that she would rather the matter were not renewed; that if her mind had changed, she had good reason for justifying the change; and when I, finding that I had no chance myself, began to plead for you, she hinted to me that, in consequence of the feud that had taken place between the families, and the slanders that my mother had cast upon her honor and principles, she was resolved to have no further connection whatsoever with any one of the blood; her affections were not *now* her own."

"Alas, Harry!" said Charles, "how few can bear the effects of unexpected prosperity. When she and I were both comparatively poor, she was all affection; but now that she has become an heiress, see what a change there is! Well, Harry, if she can be faithless and selfish, I can be both resolute and proud. She shall have no further trouble from me on that subject; only I must say, I don't envy her conscience."

"Don't be rash, Charles—we should judge of her charitably and generously; I don't think myself she is so much to blame. O'Connor Fardour, or Farther, or whatever you call him——"

"O, Ferdora!"

"Yes, Ferdora; that fellow is at the bottom of it all; he has plied her well during the estrangement, and to some purpose. I never visit them that I don't find him alone with her. He is, besides, both frank and handsome, with a good deal of dash and insinuation in his address and manner, and, besides, a good

property, I am told. But, in the meantime, I have a favor to ask of you; that is, if you think you can place confidence in me."

"Every confidence, my dear Harry," said Charles, clasping his hand warmly; "every confidence. As I said before, you shall be my guide and adviser."

"Thank you, Charles. I may make mistakes, but I shall do all for the best. Well, then, will you leave O'Connor to me? If you do, I shall not promise much, because I am not master of future events; but this is all I ask of you—yes, there is one thing more—to hold aloof from her and her family for a time."

"After what you have told me, Harry, that is an unnecessary request now; but as for O'Connor, I think *he* ought to be left to myself."

"And so he shall in due time; but I must place him in a proper position for you first—a thing which you could not do now, nor even attempt to do, without meanness. Are you, then, satisfied to leave this matter in my hands, and to remain quite until I shall bid you *act?*"

"Perfectly, Harry, perfectly; I shall be guided by you in everything."

"Well, now, Charley, we will have a double triumph soon, I hope. All is not lost that's in danger. The poor girl is surrounded by a clique. Priests have interfered. Her parents, you know, are Catholics; so, you know, is O'Connor. Poor Alice, you know, too, is anything but adamant. And now I will say no more; but in requital for what I *have* said, go and send our patient mild mamma, to me. I really must endeavor to try something with her, in order to save us all from this kind of life she is leading us."

When his mother entered he assumed the superior and man of authority; his countenance exhibited something unpleasant, and in a decisive and rather authoritative tone he said,—

"Mother, will you be pleased to take a seat?"

"You are angry with me, Harry—I know you are; but I could not restrain my feelings, nor keep your secret, when I thought of their insolence in requiting you—*you*, to whom the property would and ought to have come——"

"Pray, ma'am, take a seat."

She sat down—anxious, but already subdued, as was evident by her manner.

"I," proceeded her son, "to whom the property would and ought to have come—and I, to whom it *will* come——"

"But are you sure of that?"

"Not, I am afraid, while I have such a mother as you are—a woman in whom I can place no confidence with safety. Why did you betray me to this silly family?"

"Because, as I said before, I could not help it; my temper got the better of me."

"Ay, and I fear it will always get the better of you. I could now give you very agreeable information as to that property and the piece of curds that possesses it; but then, as I said, there is no placing any confidence in a woman of your temper."

"If the property is concerned, Harry, you may depend your life on me. So help me, God, if ever I will betray you again."

"Well, that's a solemn asseveration, and I will

depend on it; but if you betray me to this family the property is lost to us and our heirs forever."

"Do not fear me; I have taken the oath."

"Well, then, listen; if you could understand Latin, I would give you a quotation from a line of Virgil—

'Hæret lateri lethalis arundo.'

The girl's doomed—subdued—overcome; I am in the process of killing her."

"Of killing her! My God, how? not by violence, surely—that, you know, would not be safe."

"I know that; no—not by violence, but by the power of this dark eye that you see in my head."

"Heavenly Father! then you possess it?"

"I do; and if I were never to see her again I don't think she could recover; she will merely wither away very gently, and in due time will disappear *without issue*—and then, whose is the property?"

"As to that, you know there can be no doubt about it; there is the will—the stupid will, by which she got it."

"I shall see her again, however—nay, in spite of them I shall see her time after time, and shall give her the Evil Eye, until the scene closes—until I attend her funeral."

"My mind is somewhat at ease," replied his mother; "because I was alarmed lest you should have had recourse to any process that might have brought you within the operation of the law."

"Make your mind easy on that point, my dear mother. No law compels a man to close his eyes; a cat, you know, may look on a king; but of one thing you may be certain—she dies—THE VICTIM IS MINE."

"One thing *is* certain," replied his mother, "that if she and Charles should marry, you are ousted from the property."

"Don't trouble yourself about such a contingency; I have taken steps which I think will prevent that. I speak in a double sense; but if I find, after all, that they are likely to fail, I shall take others still more decisive."

CHAPTER XIII.

WOODWARD IS DISCARDED FROM MR. GOODWIN'S FAMILY. —OTHER PARTICULARS OF IMPORTANCE.

THE reader sees that Harry Woodward, having ascertained the mutual affection which subsisted between his brother and Alice, resorted to such measures as were likely to place obstructions in the way of their meeting, which neither of them was likely to remove. He felt, now, satisfied that Charles, in consequence of the malignant fabrications which he himself had palmed upon him for truth, would, most assuredly, make no further attempt to renew their former intimacy. When Alice, too, stated to him, that if she married not Charles, whether he proved worthy of her or otherwise, she would never marry another, he felt that she was unconsciously advancing the diabolical plans which he was projecting and attempting to carry into effect. If she died without marriage or without issue, the property, at her death, according to his uncle's will, reverted, as we have said, to himself. His object, therefore, was to expedite her demise with as little

delay as possible, in order that he might become master of the patrimony. With this generous principle for his guide, he made it a point to visit the Goodwins, and to see Alice as often as was compatible with the ordinary usages of society. Had Caterine Collins not put the unsuspecting and timid girl on her guard against the influence of the Evil Eye, as possessed by Woodward, for whom she acted as agent in the business, that poor girl would not have felt anything like what this diabolical piece of information occasioned her to experience. From the moment she heard it her active imagination took the alarm. An unaccountable terror seized upon her; she felt as if some dark doom was impending over her. It was in a peculiar degree the age of superstition; and the terrible influence of the Evil Eye was one not only of the commonest, but the most formidable of them all. The dark, significant, but sinister gaze of Harry Woodward was, she thought, forever upon her. She could not withdraw her imagination from it. It haunted her; it was fixed upon her, accompanied by a dreadful smile of apparent courtesy, but of a malignity which she felt as if it penetrated her whole being, both corporeal and mental. She hurried to bed at night with a hope that sleep might exclude the frightful vision which followed her; but, alas! even sleep was no security to her against its terrors. It was now that in her distempered dreams imagination ran riot. She fled from him, or attempted to fly, but feared that she had not strength for the effort; he followed her, she thought, and when she covered her face with her hands in order to avoid the sight of him, she felt him seizing her by the wrists,

and removing her arms in order that he might pour the malignant influence of that terrible eye into her very heart. From these scenes she generally awoke with a shriek, when her maid, Sarah Sullivan, who of late slept in the same room with her, was obliged to come to her assistance, and soothe and sustain her as well as she could. She then lay for hours in such a state of terror and agitation as cannot be described, until near morning, when she generally fell into something like sound sleep. In fact, her waking moments were easy when compared with the persecution which the spirit of that man inflicted on her during her broken and restless slumbers. The dreadful eye, as it rested upon her, seemed as if its powerful but killing expression proceeded from the heart and spirit of some demon who sought to wither her by slow degrees out of life; and she felt that he was succeeding in his murderous and merciless object. It is not to be wondered at, then, that she dreaded the state of sleep more than any other condition of existence in which she could find herself. As night, and the hour of retiring to what ought to have been a refreshing rest returned, her alarms also returned with tenfold terror; and such was her apprehension of those fiend-like and nocturnal visits, that she entreated Sarah Sullivan to sleep with and awaken her the moment she heard her groan or shriek. Our readers may perceive that the innocent girl's tenure of life could not be a long one under such strange and unexampled sufferings.

The state of her health now occasioned her parents to feel the most serious alarm. She herself disclosed to them the fearful intelligence which had been com-

municated to her in such a friendly spirit by Caterine Collins, to wit, that Harry Woodward possessed the terrible power of the Evil Eye, and that she felt he was attempting to kill her by it; adding, that from the state of her mind and health she feared he had succeeded, and that certainly, if he were permitted to continue his visits, she knew that she could not long survive.

"I remember well," said her father, "that when he was a boy of about six or seven he was called, by way of nickname, *Harry na Suil Gloir;* and, indeed, the common report always has been that his mother possesses the evil eye against cattle, when she wishes to injure any neighbor that doesn't treat her with what she thinks to be proper and becoming respect. If her son Harry has the accursed gift it comes from her blood; they say there is some old story connected with her family that accounts for it, but, as I never heard it, I don't know what it is."

"I agree with you," said his wife; "if he has it at all, he may thank her for it. There is, I fear, some bad principle in her; for surely the fierceness and overbearing spirit of her pride, and the malignant calumnies of her foul and scandalous tongue, can proceed from nothing that's good."

"Well, Martha," observed her husband, "if the devilish and unaccountable hatred which she bears her fellow-creatures is violent, she has the satisfaction of knowing—and well she knows it—that it is returned to her with compound interest: I question if the devil himself is detested with such a venomous feeling as she is. Her own husband and children cannot like a bone in her skin."

"And yet," replied Alice, "you would have made this woman my mother-in-law! Do you think it was from any regard to us that she came here to propose a marriage between her son and me? No, indeed, dear papa, it was for the purpose of securing the property, which her brother left me, for him who would otherwise have inherited it. And do you imagine for a moment that Harry Woodward himself ever felt one emotion of personal affection for me? If you do you are quite mistaken. I knew and felt all along—even while he was assuming the part of the lover—that he actually hated, not only me, but every one of the family. His object was the property, and so was that of his mother; but I absolve all the other members of the family from any knowledge of, or participation in, their schemes. As it is, if you wish to see yourselves childless you will allow his visits, or, if not, you will never permit his presence under this roof again. I fear, however, that it is now too late—you see that I am already on the brink of the grave, in consequence of the evil influence which the dreadful villain has gained over me, and, indeed," she added, bursting into tears, "I have, at this moment, no hopes of recovery. My strength, both bodily and mental, is gone—I am as weak as an infant, and I see nothing before me but an early grave. I have also other sorrows, but even to you I will not disclose them—perhaps on my bed of death I may."

The last words were scarcely uttered when she fainted. Her parents were dreadfully alarmed—in a moment both were in tears, but they immediately summoned assistance. Sarah Sullivan made her

appearance, attended by others of the servants; the usual remedies were applied, and in the course of about ten or twelve minutes she recovered, and was weeping in a paroxysm bordering on despair when Harry Woodward entered the room. This was too much for the unfortunate girl. It seemed like setting the seal of death to her fate. She caught a glimpse of him. There was the malignant, but derisive look—one which he meant to be courteous, but which the bitter feeling within him overshadowed with the gloomy triumph of an evil spirit. She placed her hands over her eyes, gave one loud shriek, and immediately fell into strong convulsions.

"Good heavens!" exclaimed Woodward, "what is the matter with Miss Goodwin? I am sincerely sorry to see this. Is not her health good?"

"Pray, sir," replied her father, "how did you come to obtrude yourself here at such a moment of domestic distress?"

"Why, my dear sir," replied Woodward, "of course you must know that I was ignorant of all this. The hall-door was open, as it generally is, so was the door of this room, and I came in accordingly, as I have been in the habit of doing, to pay my respects to the family."

"Yes," said Mr Goodwin, "the hall-door is generally open, but it shall not be so in future. Come out of the room, Mr. Woodward; your presence is not required here."

"O, certainly," replied Woodward, "I feel that; and I assure you I would not by any means have intruded had I known that Miss Goodwin was unwell."

"She *is* unwell," responded her father; "very unwell; unwell unto death, I fear. And now, Mr. Woodward," he proceeded, when they had reached the hall, "I beg to state peremptorily and decidedly that all intimacy and intercourse between you and our family must cease from this hour. You visit here no more."

"This is very strange language, Mr. Goodwin," replied the other, "and I think, as between two gentlemen, I am entitled to an explanation. I received the permission of yourself, your lady, and your daughter to visit here. I am not conscious of having done anything unbecoming a gentleman, that could or ought to deprive me of a privilege which I looked upon as an honor."

"Well, then," replied her father, "look into your own conscience, and perhaps you will find the necessary explanation there. I am master of my own house and my own motions, and now I beg you instantly to withdraw, and to consider this your last visit here."

"May I not be permitted to call to-morrow to inquire after Miss Goodwin's health?"

"Assuredly not."

"Nor to send a messenger?"

"By no means; and now, sir, withdraw; I must go in to my daughter, till I see what can be done for her, or whether anything can or not."

Harry Woodward looked upon him steadily for a time, and the old man felt as if his very strength was becoming relaxed; a sense of faintness and terror came over him, and, as Woodward took his departure in silence, the father of Alice began to abandon all

hopes of her recovery. He himself felt the effects of the mysterious gaze which Woodward had fastened on him, and entered the room, conscious of the fatal power of the Evil Eye.

Fit after fit succeeded each other for the space of, at least, an hour and a half, after which they ceased, but left her in such a state of weakness and terror that she might be said, at that moment, to hover between life and death. She was carried in her distracted father's arms to bed, and after they had composed her as well as they could, her father said,—

"My darling child, you may now summon strength and courage; that man, that bad man, will never come under this roof again. I have finally settled the point, and you have nothing further now, nor anything worse, to dread from him. I have given the villain his *nunc dimittis* once and forever, and you will never see him more."

"But I fear, papa," she replied, feebly, "that, as I said before, it is now too late. I feel that he has killed me. I know not how I will pass this night. I dread the hours of sleep above all conditions of my unhappy existence. O, no wonder that the entrance of that man-demon to our house should be heralded by the storms and hurricanes of heaven, and that the terrible fury of the elements, as indicative of the Almighty's anger, should mark his introduction to our family. Then the prodigy which took place when the bonfires were lighted to welcome his accursed return—the shower of blood! O, may God support me, and, above all things, banish him from my dreams! Still, I feel some relief by the knowledge that he is not to come here

again. Yes, I feel that it relieves me; but, alas! I fear that even the consciousness of that cannot prevent the awful impression that I think I am near death."

"No, darling," replied her mother, "don't allow that thought to gain upon you. We'll get a fairy-man or a fairy-woman, because they know the best remedies against everything of that kind, when a common leech or chirurgeon can do nothing."

"No," replied her father, "I will allow nothing of the kind under this roof. It's not a safe thing to have dealings with such people. We know that the Church forbids it. Perhaps it's a witch we might stumble on; and would it not be a frightful thing to see one of those who are leagued with the devil bringing their unconsecrated breaths about us this week, as it were, and, perhaps, burned the next? No, we will have a regular physician, who has his own character, as such, to look to and support by his honesty and skill, but none of those withered classes of hell that are a curse to the country."

"Very well," replied Mrs. Goodwin, "have your own way in it. I dare say you are right."

"O, don't bring any fairy-women or fairy-men about me," said Alice. "The very sight of them would take away the little life I have left."

In the meantime Harry Woodward, who had a variety of plans and projects to elaborate, found himself, as every villain of his kind generally does, encompassed by doubt and apprehension of their failure. The reader will understand the condition of his heart and feelings when he advances further in this narrative. Old Lindsay, who was of a manly and generous dis-

position, felt considerable surprise that all intimacy should have been discontinued between his son Charles and Alice Goodwin. As for the property which she now possessed, he never once thought of it in connection with their former affection for each other. He certainly appreciated the magnanimity and disinterestedness of his son in ceasing to urge his claims after she had become possessed of such a fortune; and it struck him that something must have been wrong, or some evil agency at work, which prevented the Goodwins from reëstablishing their former intimacy with Charles whilst they seemed to court that of his brother. Here was something strange, and he could not understand it. One morning, when they were all seated at breakfast, he spoke as follows:—

"I can't," said he, "comprehend the conduct of the Goodwins. Their daughter, if we are to judge from appearances, has discarded her accepted lover, poor Charles, here. Now, this doesn't look well. There seems to be something capricious, perhaps selfish, in it. Still, knowing the goodness of their hearts, as I do, I cannot but feel that there is something like a mystery in it. I had set my heart upon a marriage between Charles and Alice before ever she came into the property bequeathed to her. In this I was not selfish certainly. I looked only to their happiness. Yes, and my mind is still set upon this marriage, and it shall go hard with me or I will accomplish it."

"Father," said Charles, "if you regard or respect me, I entreat of you to abandon any such project. Ferdora O'Connor is now the favorite there. He is rich and I am poor; no, the only favor I ask is that

you will never more allude to the subject in my hearing."

"But I will allude to it, and I will demand an explanation besides," replied Lindsay.

"Father," observed Harry, "I trust that no member of this family is capable of an act of unparalleled meanness. I, myself, pleaded my brother's cause with that heartless and deceitful girl in language which could not be mistaken. And what was the consequence? Because I ventured to do so I have been forbidden to visit there again. They told me, without either preface or apology, that they will have no further intercourse with our family. Ferdora O'Connor is the chosen man."

"It is false," said his sister, her eyes sparkling with indignation as she spoke; "it is abominably false; and, father, you are right; seek an explanation from the Goodwins. I feel certain that there are evil spirits at work."

"I shall, my dear girl," replied her father; "it is only an act of justice to them. And if the matter be at all practicable, I shall have Charles and her married still."

"Why not think of Harry?" said his wife; "as the person originally destined to receive the property, he has the strongest claim."

"You are talking now in the selfish and accursed principles of the world," replied Lindsay. "Charles has the claim of her early affection, and I shall urge it."

"Very well," said his wife; "if you succeed in bringing about a marriage between her and Charles, I will punish both you and him severely."

"As how, madam?" asked her husband.

"Are you aware of one fact, Lindsay?"

"I am aware of one melancholy fact," he replied, sarcastically.

"And, pray, what is it?" she inquired.

"Faith," he replied, "that I am your husband."

"O, yes — just so — that is the way I am treated, children; you see it and you hear it. But, now, listen to me; you know, Lindsay, that the property I brought you, as your unfortunate wife, was property in my own right; you know, too, that by our marriage settlement that property was settled on me, with the right of devising it to any of my children whom I may select for that purpose. Now, I tell you, that if you press this marriage between Charles and Alice Goodwin, I shall take this property into my own hands, shall make my will in favor of Harry, and you and your children may seek a shelter where you can find one."

"Me and *my* children! Why, I believe you think you have no children but Harry here. Well, you may do as you like with your property; I am not so poor but I and my children can live upon my own. This house and place, I grant you, are yours, and, as for myself, I am willing to leave it to-day; a life of exclusion and solitude will be better than that which I lead with you."

"Papa," said Maria, throwing her arms about his neck and bursting into tears, "when you go I shall go; and wherever you may go to, I shall accompany you."

"Father," said Charles, in a choking voice, and grasping his hand as he spoke, "if you leave this

house you shall not go alone. Neither I nor Maria shall separate ourselves from you. We will have enough to live on with comfort and decency."

"Mother," said Harry, rising up and approaching her with a face of significant severity; "mother, you have forced me to say—and heaven knows the pain with which I say it—that I am ashamed of you. Why will you use language that is calculated to alienate from me the affections of a brother and sister whom I love with so much tenderness? I trust you understand me when I tell you now that I identify myself with their feelings and objects, and that no sordid expectation of your property shall ever induce me to take up your quarrel or separate myself from them. Dispose of your property as you wish; I for one shall not earn it by sacrificing the best affections of the heart, nor by becoming a slave to such a violent and indefensible temper as yours. As for me, I shall not stand in need of your property—I will have enough of my own."

They looked closely at each other; but that look was sufficient. The cunning mother thoroughly understood the freemason glance of his eye, and exclaimed,—

"Well, I see I am abandoned by *all* my children; but I will endeavor to bear it. I now leave you to yourselves—to meditate and put in practice whatever plot you please against my happiness. Indeed, I know what a consolation my death would be to you all."

She then withdrew, in accordance with the significant look which Harry gave towards the door.

"Harry," said Lindsay, holding out his hand, "you are not the son of my blood, but I declare to heaven I love you as well as if you were. Your conduct is noble

and generous; ay, and as a natural consequence, disinterested; there is no base and selfish principle in you, my dear boy; and I honor and love you as if I were your father in reality."

"Harry," said Maria, kissing him, "I repeat and feel all that dear papa has said."

"And so do I," exclaimed Charles, "and if I ever entertained any other feeling I fling it to the winds."

"You all overrate me," said Harry; "but, perhaps, if you were aware of my private remonstrances with my mother upon her unfortunate principles and temper, you would give me more credit even than you do. My object is to produce peace and harmony between you, and if I can succeed in that I shall feel satisfied, let my mother's property go where it may. Of course, you must now be aware that I separate myself from her and her projects, and identify myself, as I said, with you all. Still, there is one request I have to make of you, father, my dear father, for well may I call you so; and it is that you will not, as an independent man and a gentleman, attempt to urge this marriage, on which you seem to have set your heart, between Charles and Goodwin's daughter. You are not aware of what I know upon this subject. She and Ferdora O'Connor are about to be married; but I will not mention what I *could* mention until after that ceremony shall have taken place."

"Well," said his sister, "you appear to speak very sincerely, Harry, but I know and feel that there is some mistake somewhere."

"Harry," said Lindsay, "from what has occurred this morning, I shall be guided by you. I will *not*

press this marriage, neither shall I stoop to seek an explanation."

"Thank you, sir," replied Harry. "I advise you as I do because I would not wish to see our whole family insulted in your person."

Maria and her brother Charles looked at each other, and seemed to labor under a strange and somewhat mysterious feeling. The confidence, however, with which Harry spoke evidently depressed them, and, as they entertained not the slightest suspicion of his treachery, they left the apartment each with a heavy heart.

Harry, from this time forward, associated more with his brother than he had done, and seemed to take him more into his confidence. He asked him out in all his sporting expeditions; and proposed that they should each procure a shooting dress of the same color and materials, which was accordingly done; and so strongly did they resemble each other, when dressed in them, that in an uncertain light, or at a distance, it was nearly impossible to distinguish the one from the other. In fact, the brothers were now inseparable, Harry's object being to keep Charles as much under his eye and control as possible, from an apprehension that, on cool reflection, he might take it into his head to satisfy himself by a personal interview with Alice Goodwin as to the incomprehensible change which had estranged her affection from him.

Still, although the affection of those brothers seemed to increase, the conduct of Harry was full of mystery. That the confidence he placed in Charles was slight and partial admitted of no doubt. He was in the

habit, for instance, of going out after the family had gone to bed, as we have mentioned before; and it was past all doubt that he had been frequently seen accompanied, in his midnight rambles, by what was known in the neighborhood as the *Black Spectre*, or, by the common people, as the *Shan-dhinne-dhuv*, or the dark old man. These facts invested his character, which, in spite of all his plausibility of manner, was unpopular, with something of great dread, as involving on his part some unholy association with the evil and supernatural. This was peculiarly the age of superstition and of a belief in the connection of both men and women with diabolical agencies; for such was the creed of the day.

One evening, about this time, Caterine Collins was on her way home to Rathfillan, when, on crossing a piece of bleak moor adjacent to the town, a powerful young fellow, dressed in the truis, cloak, and barrad of the period, started up from a clump of furze bushes, and addressed her as follows:—

"Caterine," said he, "are you in a hurry?"

"Not particularly," she replied; "but in God's name, Shawn, what brings you here? Are you mad? or what tempts you to come within the jaws of the law that are gaping for you as their appointed victim? Don't you know you are an outlaw?"

"I will answer your first question first," he replied. "What tempted me to come here? Vengeance—deep and deadly vengeance. Vengeance upon the villain who has ruined Grace Davoren. I had intended to take *her* life first; but I am an Irishman, and will not visit upon the head of the innocent girl, whom this in

carnate devil has tempted beyond her strength, the crime for which *he* is accountable."

"Well, indeed, Shawn, it would be only serving him right; but, in the meantime, you had better be on your guard; it is said that he fears neither God nor devil, and always goes well armed; so be cautious, and if you take him at all, it must be by threachery."

"No," said the outlaw, indignantly, "I'll never take him or any man by treachery. I know I am an outlaw; but it was the merciless laws of the country, and their injustice to me and mine, that made me so; I resisted them openly and like a man; but, bad as I am supposed to be, I will never stain either my name or my conscience by an act of cowardly treachery. I will meet this dark villain face to face, and take my revenge as a brave man ought. You say he goes well armed, and that is a proof that he feels his own guilt; yes, he goes well armed, you say; so do I, and it will not be the treacherous murderer he will meet, but the open foe."

"Well," replied Caterine, "that is just like you, Shawn; and it is no wonder that the women were fond of you."

"Yes," said he, "but the girl that was dearer to me a thousand times than my own life has proved faithless, because there is a stain upon my name—a stain, but no crime, Caterine; a stain made by the law, but no crime. Had her heart been loyal and true, she would have loved me ten times more in consequence of my very disgrace—if disgrace I ought to call it; but instead of that—but wait—O, the villain! Well, I shall meet him, I trust, before long, and then, Caterine, ah, THEN!"

"Well, Shawn, if she has desarted you, I know one that loves you better than ever she did, and that would never desart you, as Grace Davoren has done."

"Ah, Caterine," replied the outlaw, sorrowfully, "I am past that now; my heart is broke—I could never love another. What proof of truth or affection could any other woman give me after the treachery of her who once said she loved me so well? She said, indeed, some time ago, that it was her father forced her to it, but that was after she had seen *him*, for well I know she often told me a different story before the night of the bonfire and the shower of blood. Well, Caterine, that shower of blood was not sent for nothing. It came as the prophecy of his fate, which, if I have life, will be a bloody one."

"Shawn," replied Caterine, as if she had not paid much attention to his words, "Shawn, dear Shawn, there is one woman who would give her life for your love."

"Ah," said Shawn, "it's aisily said, at all events—aisily said; but who is it, Caterine?"

"She is now speaking to you," she returned. "Shawn, you cannot but know that I have long loved you; and I now tell you that I love you still — ay, and a thousand times more than ever Grace Davoren did."

"You!" said Shawn, recoiling with indignation; "is it you, a spy, a fortune-teller, a go-between, and, if all be true, a witch; you, whose life and character would make a modest woman blush to hear them mentioned? Why, the curse of heaven upon you! how dare you think of proposing such a subject to me?

Do you think because I'm marked by the laws that my heart has lost anything of its honesty and manhood? Begone, you hardened and unholy vagabond, and leave my sight."

"Is that your language, Shawn?"

"It is; and what other language could any man with but a single spark of honesty and respect for himself use towards you? Begone, I say."

"Yes, I will begone; but perhaps you may live to rue your words: that is all."

"And, perhaps, so may you," he replied. "Leave my sight. You are a disgrace to the name of woman."

She turned upon her heel, and on the instant bent her steps towards Rathfillan House.

"*Shawn-na-Middogue,*" she said as she went along, "*you* talk about revenge, but wait till you know what the revenge of an insulted woman is. It is not an aisy thing to know your haunts; but I'll set them upon your trail that will find you out if you were to hide yourself in the bowels of the earth, for the words you used to me this night. *Dar manim,* I will never rest either night or day until I see you swing from a gibbet."

Instead of proceeding to the little town of Rathfillan, she changed her mind and turned her steps to Rathfillan House, the residence, as our readers are aware, of the generous and kind-hearted Mr. Lindsay.

On arriving there she met our old acquaintance, Barney Casey, on the way from the kitchen to the stable. Observing that she was approaching the hall-door with the evident purpose of knocking, and feeling

satisfied that her business could be with none of the family except Harry, he resolved to have some conversation with her, in order, if possible, to get a glimpse of its purport. Not, indeed, that he entertained any expectation of such a result, because he knew the craft and secrecy of the woman he had to deal with; but, at all events, he thought that he might still glean something significant even by her equivocations, if not by her very silence. He accordingly turned over and met her.

"Well, Caterine, won't this be a fine night when the moon and stars comes out to show you the road home again afther you manage the affair you're bent on?"

"Why, what am I bent on?" she replied, sharply.

"Why, to build a church to-night, wid the assistance of Mr. Harry Woodward."

"Talk with respect of your masther's stepson," she replied, indignantly.

"And my sweet misthress's son," returned Barney, significantly. "Why, Caterine, I hope you won't lift me till I fall. What did I say disrespectful of him? Faith, I only know that the wondher is how such a devil's scald could have so good and kind-hearted a son," he added, disentangling himself from her suspicions, knowing perfectly well, as he did, that any unfavorable expression he might utter against that vindictive gentleman would most assuredly be communicated to him with comments much stronger than the text. This would only throw him out of Harry's confidence, and deprive him of those opportunities of probably learning, from their casual conversation, some

tendency of his mysterious movements, especially at night; for that he was enveloped in mystery was a fact of which he felt no doubt whatsoever. He accordingly resolved to cancel the consequences even of the equivocal allusion to him which he had made, and which he saw at a glance that Caterine's keen suspicions had interpreted into a bad sense.

"So you see, Katty," he proceeded, "agra-machree that you wor, don't lift me, as I said, till I fall; but what harm is it to be fond of a spree wid a purty girl? Sure it's a good man's case; but I'll tell you more; you must know the misthress's wig took fire this mornin', and she was within an inch of havin' the house in flames. Ah, it's she that blew a regular breeze, threatened to make the masther and the other two take to their travels from about the house and place, and settle the same house and place upon Mr. Harry."

"Well, Barney," said Caterine, deeply interested, "what was the upshot?"

"Why, that Masther Harry—long life to him—parted company wid her on the spot; said he would take part wid the masther and the other two, and tould her to her teeth that he did not care a dam about the property, and that she might leave it as a legacy to ould Nick, who, he said, desarved it better at her hands than he did."

"Well, well," replied Caterine, "I never thought he was such a fool as all that comes to. Devil's cure to him, if she laves it to some one else! that's my compassion for him."

"Well, but, Caterine, what's the news? When will

the sky fall, you that knows so much about futurity?"

"The news is anything but good, Barney. The sky will fall some Sunday in the middle of next week, and then for the lark-catching. But tell me, Barney, is Mr. Harry within? because, if he is, I'd thank you to let him know that I wish to see him. I have a bit of favor to ask of him about my uncle Solomon's cabin; the masther's threatnin' to pull it down."

Now, Barney knew the assertion to be a lie, because it was only a day or two previous to the conversation that he had heard Mr. Lindsay express his intention of building the old herbalist a new one. He kept his knowledge of this to himself, however.

"And so you want him to change the masther's mind upon the subject. Faith and you're just in luck after this mornin's skirmish—skirmish! no bedad, but a field day itself; the masther could refuse him nothing. Will I say what you want him for?"

"You may or you may not; but, on second thoughts, I think it will be enough to say simply that I wish to spake to him particularly."

"Very well, Caterine," replied Barney, "I'll tell him so."

In a few minutes Harry joined her on the lawn, where she awaited him, and the following dialogue took place between them:

"Well, Caterine, Casey tells me that you have something particular to say to me."

"And very particular indeed, it is, Mr. Harry."

"Well, then, the sooner we have it the better; pray, what is it?"

"I'm afeard, Mr. Woodward, that unless you have some good body's blessin' about you, your life isn't worth a week's purchase."

"Some good body's blessing!" he replied ironically; "well, never mind that, but let me know the danger, if danger there be; at all events, I am well prepared for it."

"The danger then is this—and terrible it is—that born devil, *Shawn-na-Middogue*, has got hold of what's goin' on between you and Grace Davoren."

"Between *me* and Grace Davoren!" he exclaimed, in a voice of well-feigned astonishment. "You mean my brother Charles. Why, Caterine, that soft-hearted and soft-headed idiot, for I can call him nothing else, has made himself a perfect fool about her, and what is worst of all, I am afraid he will break his engagement with Miss Goodwin, and marry this wench. Me! why, except that he sent me once or twice to meet her, and apologize for his not being able to keep his appointment with her, I know nothing whatsoever of the unfortunate girl, unless that, like a fool, as she is, it seems to me that she is as fond of him as he, the fool, on the other hand, is of her. As for my part, I shall deliver his messages to her no more—and, indeed, it was wrong of me ever to do so."

The moon had now risen, and Caterine, on looking keenly and incredulously into his face, read nothing there but an expression of apparent sincerity and sorrow for the indiscretion and folly of his brother.

"Well," she proceeded, "in spite of all you tell me I say that it does not make your danger the less. It is not your brother but yourself that he suspects, and

whether right or wrong, it is upon you that his vengeance will fall."

"Well, but, Caterine," he replied, "could you not see *Shawn-na-Middogue* and remedy that?"

"How, sir?" she replied.

"Why, by telling him the truth," said the far-sighted villain, "that it is my brother, and not I, that was the intriguer with her."

"Is that generous towards your brother, Mr. Woodward? No, sir; sooner than bring the vengeance of such a person as Shawn upon him, I would have the tongue cut out of my mouth, or the right arm off my body."

"And I, Caterine," he answered, retrieving himself as well as he could; "yes, *I* deserve to have my tongue cut out, and my right arm chopped off, for what I have said. O, no; if there *be* danger let me run the risk, and not poor, good, kind-hearted Charles, who is certainly infatuated by this girl. He is to meet her to-morrow night at nine o'clock, in the little clump of alders below the well, but I shall go in his place—that is, if I can prevail upon him to allow me—and endeavor once for all to put an end to this business: mark that I said, if he will allow me, although I scarcely think he will. Now, good-night, and many thanks for your good wishes towards myself and him. Accept of this, and good-night again." As he spoke he placed some money in her unreluctant hand, and returned on his way home.

CHAPTER XIV.

SHAWN-NA-MIDDOGUE STABS CHARLES LINDSAY IN MISTAKE FOR HIS BROTHER.

SHAWN-NA-MIDDOGUE, though uneducated, was a young man of no common intellect. That he had been selected to head the outlaws, or rapparees, of that day, was a sufficient proof of this. After parting from Caterine Collins, on whom the severity of his language fell with such bitterness, he began to reflect that he had acted with great indiscretion, to say the least of it. He knew that if there was a woman in the barony who, if she determined on it, could trace him to his most secret haunts, she was that woman. He saw, too, that after she had left him, evidently in deep indignation, she turned her steps towards Rathfillan House, most probably with an intention of communicating to Harry Woodward the strong determinations of vengeance which he had expressed against him. Here, then, by want of temper and common policy, had he created two formidable enemies against himself. This, he felt, was an oversight for which he could scarcely forgive himself. He resolved, if possible, to repair the error he had committed, and, with this object in view, he hung about the place until her return should afford him an opportunity of making such an explanation as might soothe her into good-humor and a more friendly feeling towards him. Nay, he even determined to prom-

ise her marriage, in order to disarm her resentment and avert the danger which, he knew, was to be apprehended from it. He accordingly stationed himself in the shelter of a ditch, along which he knew she must pass on her way home. He had not long, however, to wait. In the course of half an hour he saw her approach, and as she was passing him he said in a low, confidential voice,—

"Caterine!"

"Who is that?" she asked, but without exhibiting any symptoms of alarm.

"It's me," he replied—"Shawn."

"Well," she replied, "and what is that to me whether it's you or not?"

"I have thought over our discourse a while ago, and I'm sorry for what I've said;—will you let me see you a part of the way home?"

"I can't prevent you from comin'," she replied, "if you're disposed to come—the way is as free to you as to me."

They then proceeded together, and our readers must gather from the incidents which are to follow what the result was of Shawn's policy in his conversation with her on the way. It is enough to say that they parted on the best and most affectionate terms, and that a certain smack, very delicious to the lips of Caterine, was heard before Shawn bade her good-night.

Barney Casey, who suspected there was something in the wind, in consequence of the secret interview which took place between Caterine Collins and Harry, conscious as he felt that it was for no good purpose, watched that worthy gentleman's face with keen but

quiet observation, in the hope of being able to draw some inference from its expression. This, however, was a vain task. The face was impassable, inscrutable; no sympton of agitation, alarm, or concealed satisfaction could be read in it, or anything else, in short, but the ordinary expression of the most perfect indifference. Barney knew his man, however, and felt aware, from former observations, of the power which Woodward possessed of disguising his face whenever he wished, even under the influence of the strongest emotions. Accordingly, notwithstanding all this indifference of manner, he felt that it was for no common purpose Caterine Collins sought an interview with him, and with this impression on his mind he resolved to watch his motions closely.

The next day Harry and Charles went out to course, accompanied by Barney himself, who, by the way, observed that the former made a point to bring a case of pistols and a dagger with him, which he concealed so as that they might not be seen. This discovery was the result of Barney's vigilance and suspicions, for when Harry was prepared to follow his brother, who went to put the dogs in leash, he said:

"Barney, go and assist Mr. Charles, and I will join you both on the lawn."

Barney accordingly left the room and closed the door after him; but instead of proceeding, as directed, to join Charles, he deliberately put his eye to the key-hole, and saw Harry secrete the pistols and dagger about his person. Each, also, brought his gun at the suggestion of Harry, who said, that although they went out merely to course, yet it was not improbable that

they might get a random shot at the grouse or partridge as they went along. Upon all these matters Barney made his comments, although he said nothing upon the subject even to Charles, from whom he scarcely ever concealed a secret. That Harry was brave and intrepid even to rashness he knew; but why he should arm himself with such secrecy and caution occasioned him much conjecture. His intrigue with Grace Davoren was beginning to be suspected. *Shawna-Middogue* might have heard of it. Caterine Collins was one of Woodward's agents—at least it was supposed from their frequent interviews that she was, to a certain degree, in his confidence: might not her request, then, to see him on the preceding night proceed from an anxiety, on her part, to warn him against some danger to be apprehended from that fearful freebooter? This was well and correctly reasoned on the part of Barney; and, with those impressions fixed upon his mind, he accompanied the two brothers on the sporting expedition of the day.

We shall not dwell upon their success, which was even better than they had expected. Nothing, however, occurred to render either pistols or dagger necessary; but Barney observed that, on their return home, Harry made it a point to come by the well where he and Grace Davoren were in the habit of meeting, and, having taken his brother aside, he pointed to the little dark clump of alders, which skirted a small grove, and, having whispered something to him which he could not hear, they passed on by the old, broken boreen, which we have described, and reached home loaded with game, but without any particular adventure. Barney's

vigilance, however, was still awake, and he made up his mind to ascertain, if possible, why Harry had armed himself, for as yet he had nothing but suspicion on which to rest. He knew that whenever he went out at night or in the evening he always went armed; and this was only natural, for the country was in a dangerous and disturbed state, owing, as the report went, to the outrages against property which were said to have been committed by *Shawn-na-Middogue* and his rapparees. During his sporting excursions in the open day, however, he never knew him to go armed in this manner before, because, on such occasions, he had always seen his pistols and dagger hanging against the wall, where he usually kept them. On this occasion, however, Woodward went like a man who felt apprehensive of some premeditated violence on the part of an enemy. Judging, therefore, from what he had seen, as well as from what he conjectured, Barney, as we said, resolved to watch him closely.

In the meantime, the state of poor Alice Goodwin's health was deplorable. The dreadful image of Harry Woodward, or, rather, the frightful power of his satanic spirit, fastened upon her morbid and diseased imagination with such force, that no effort of her reason could shake it off. That dreadful eye was perpetually upon her and before her, both asleep and awake, and, lest she might have any one point on which to rest for comfort, the idea of Charles Lindsay's attachment to Grace Davoren would come over her, only to supersede one misery by introducing another. In this wretched state she was when the calamitous circumstances, which we are about to relate, took place.

Barney Casey was a good deal engaged that evening, for indeed he was a general servant in his master's family, and was expected to put a hand to, and superintend, everything. He was, therefore, out of the way for a time, having gone to Rathfillan on a message for his mistress, whom he cursed in his heart for having sent him. He lost little time, however, in discharging it, and was just on his return when he saw Harry Woodward entering the old boreen we have described; and, as the night was rather dark, he resolved to ascertain—although he truly suspected—the object of this nocturnal adventure. He accordingly dogged him at a safe distance, and, in accordance with his suspicions, he found that Woodward directed his steps to the clump of alders which he had, on their return that day, pointed out to his brother. Here he (Barney) ensconced himself in a close thicket, in order to watch the event. Woodward had not been many minutes there when Grace Davoren joined him. She seemed startled, and surprised, and disappointed, as Casey could perceive by her manner, or rather by the tones of her voice; but, whatever the cause of her disappointment may have been, there was little time left for either remonstrances or explanation on the part of her lover. Whilst addressing her, a young and powerful man bounded forward, and, brandishing a long dagger—the dreaded middogue—plunged it into his body, and her companion fell with a groan. The act was rapid as lightning, and the moment the work of blood and vengeance had been accomplished, the young fellow bounded away again with the same speed observable in the rapidity of his approach. Grace's screams and shrieks were loud and fearful.

"Murdherin' villain of hell," she shouted after Shawn —for it was he—"you have killed the wrong man—you have murdered the innocent. This is his brother."

Barney was at her side in a moment.

"Heavenly Father!" he exclaimed, shocked and astounded by her words, "what means this? Is it Mr. Charles?"

"O, yes," she replied, not conscious that in the alarm and terror of the moment she had betrayed herself, or rather her paramour—"innocent Mr. Charles I'm afeard is murdhered by that revengeful villain; and now, Barney, what is to be done, and how will we get assistance to bring him home? But, cheerna above! what will become of me!"

"Mr. Charles," said Barney, "is it possible that it is you that is here?"

"I am here, Barney," he replied, with difficulty, "and, I fear, mortally wounded."

"O, God forbid!" replied his humble but faithful friend. "I hope it is not so bad as you think."

"Take this handkerchief," said Charles, "tie it about my breast, and try and stop the blood. I feel myself getting weak."

This Barney proceeded to do, in which operation we shall leave him, assisted by the unfortunate girl who was indirectly the means of bringing this dreadful calamity upon him.

Shawn-na-Middogue was not out of the reach of hearing when Grace shouted after him, having paused to ascertain, if possible, whether he had done his work effectually. That Harry Woodward was Grace's paramour, *he knew;* and that Charles was innocent of that

guilt, he also knew. All that Caterine Collins had told him on the preceding night went for nothing, because he felt that Woodward had coined those falsehoods with a view to screen himself from his (Shawn's) vengeance. But in the meantime Grace's words, uttered in the extremity of her terror, assured him that there had been some mistake, and that one brother might have come to explain and apologize for the absence of the other. He consequently crept back within hearing of their conversation, and ascertained with regret the mistake he had committed. Shawn, at night, seldom went unattended by several of his gang, and on this occasion he was accompanied by about a dozen of them. His murderous mistake occasioned him to feel deep sorrow, for he was perfectly well acquainted with the amiable and generous character which Charles bore amongst his father's tenantry. His life had been, not only inoffensive, but benevolent; whilst that of his brother—short as was the time since his return to Rathfillan House—was marked by a very licentious profligacy,—a profligacy which he attempted in vain to conceal. Whilst Grace Davoren and Casey were attempting to stanch the blood which issued from the wound, four men, despatched by Shawn for the purpose, came, as if alarmed by Grace's shrieks, to the scene of the tragedy, and, after having inquired as to the cause of its occurrence, precisely as if they had been ignorant of it, they proposed that the only thing to be done, so as to give him a chance for life, was to carry him home without a moment's delay. He was accordingly raised upon their shoulders, and, with more sympathy than could be expected from

such men, was borne to his father's house in apparently a dying state.

It is unnecessary to attempt any description of the alarm which his appearance there created. His father and Maria were distracted; even his mother manifested tokens of unusual sorrow, for after all she *was* his mother; and nothing, indeed, could surpass the sorrow of the whole family. The servants were all in tears, and nothing but sobs and wailings could be heard throughout the house. Harry Woodward himself put his handkerchief to his eyes, and seemed to feel a deep but subdued sorrow. Medical aid was immediately sent for, but such was his precarious condition that no opinion could be formed as to his ultimate recovery.

The next morning the town of Rathfillan, and indeed the parish at large, were in a state of agitation, and tumult, and sorrow, as soon as the melancholy catastrophe had become known. The neighbors and tenants flocked in multitudes to learn the particulars, and ascertain his state. About eleven o'clock Harry mounted his horse, and, in defiance of the interdict that had been laid upon him, proceeded at a rapid pace to Mr. Goodwin's house, in order to disclose—with what object the reader may conjecture—the melancholy event which had happened. He found Goodwin, his wife, and Sarah Sullivan in the parlor, which he had scarcely entered when Mr. Goodwin got up, and, approaching him in a state of great alarm and excitement, exclaimed,—

"Good heavens, Mr. Woodward! can this dreadful intelligence which we have heard be true?"

"O, you have heard it, then," replied Woodward. "Alas! yes, it is too true, and my unfortunate brother

lies with life barely in him, but without the slightest hope of recovery. As for myself, I am in a state of absolute distraction; and were it not that I possess the consciousness of having done everything in my power as a friend and brother to withdraw him from this unfortunate intrigue, I think I should become fairly crazed. Miss Goodwin has for some time past been aware of my deep anxiety upon this very subject, because I deemed it a solemn duty on my part to let her know that he had degraded himself by this low attachment to such a girl, and was consequently utterly unworthy of her affection. I could not see innocence and purity imposed upon, nor her generous confidence placed on an unworthy object. This, however, is not a time to deal harshly by him. He will not be long with us, and is entitled to nothing but our forbearance and sympathy. Poor fellow! he has paid a heavy and a fatal penalty for his crime. Alas, my brother! cut down in the very prime of life, when there was still time enough for reformation and repentance! O, it is too much!"

He turned towards the window, and, putting his handkerchief to his eyes, did the pathetic with a very good grace.

"But," said Mrs. Goodwin, "what were the exact circumstances under which the deplorable act of vengeance was committed?"

"Alas! the usual thing, Mrs. Goodwin," replied Harry, attempting to clear his throat; "they met last night between nine and ten o'clock, in a clump of alders, near the well from which the inhabitants of the adjoining hamlet fetch their water. The outlaw,

Shawn-na-Middogue, a rejected lover of the girl's, stung with jealousy and vengeance, surprised them, and stabbed my unfortunate brother, I fear, to death."

"And do you think there is no hope?" she added, with tears in her eyes; "O, if he had only time for repentance!"

"Alas! madam, the medical man who has seen him scarcely holds out any hope; but, as you say, if he had time even to repent, there would be much consolation in that."

"Well," observed Goodwin, his eyes moist with tears, "after this day, I shall never place confidence in man. I did imagine that if ever there was an individual whose heart was the source of honor, truth, generosity, disinterestedness, and affection, your brother Charles was that man. I am confounded, amazed—and the whole thing appears to me like a dream; at all events, thank God, our daughter has had a narrow escape of him."

"Pray, by the way, how is Miss Goodwin?" asked Harry; "I hope she is recovering."

"So far from that," replied her father, "she is sinking fast; in truth we entertain but little hopes of her."

"On the occasion of my last visit here you forbade me your house, Mr. Goodwin," said Woodward; "but perhaps, now that you are aware of the steps I have taken to detach your daughter's affections from an individual whom I knew at the time to be unworthy of them, you may be prevailed on to rescind that stern and painful decree."

Goodwin, who was kind-hearted and placable,

seemed rather perplexed, and looked towards his wife, as if to be guided by her decision.

"Well, indeed," she replied, "I don't exactly know; perhaps we will think of it."

"No," replied Sarah Sullivan, who was toasting a thin slice of bread for Alice's breakfast. "No; if you allow this man to come about the place, as God is to judge me, you will both have a hand in your daughter's death. If the devils from hell were to visit here, she might bear it; but at the present moment one look from that man would kill her."

This remonstrance decided them.

"No, Mr. Woodward," said Goodwin; "the truth is, my daughter entertains a strong prejudice against you—in fact, a terror of you—and under these circumstances, and considering, besides, her state of health, we could not think of permitting your visits, at least," he added, "until that prejudice be removed and her health restored—if it ever shall be. We owe you no ill-will, sir; but under the circumstances we cannot, for the present, at least, allow you to visit us."

"Well," replied Woodward, "perhaps—and I sincerely trust—her health will be restored, and her prejudices against me removed, and when better times come about I shall look with anxiety to the privilege of renewing my intimacy with you all."

"Perhaps so," returned Mr. Goodwin, "and then we shall receive your visits with pleasure."

Woodward then shook hands with him and his wife, and wished them a good-morning.

On his way home worthy *Suil Balor* began to entertain reflections upon his prospects in life that he felt

to be rather agreeable. Here was his brother, whom he had kindly sent to apologize to Grace Davoren for the impossibility from illness of his meeting her according to their previous arrangement; yes, we say he feigned illness on that evening, and prevailed on the unsuspecting young man to go in his stead, in order, as he said, to give her the necessary explanations for his absence. Charles undertook this mission the more willingly, as it was his firm intention to remonstrate with the girl on the impropriety of her conduct, in continuing a secret and guilty intrigue, which must end only in her own shame and ruin. But when Harry deputed him upon such a message he anticipated the very event which had occurred, or, rather, a more fatal one still, for, despite his hopes of Alice Goodwin's ill state of health, he entertained strong apprehensions that his stepfather might, by some accidental piece of intelligence, be restored to his original impressions on the relative position in which she and Charles stood. An interview between Mr. Lindsay and her might cancel all he had done; and if every obstruction which he had endeavored to place between their union were removed, her health might recover, their marriage take place, and then what became of his chance for the property? It is true he had managed his plans and speculations with great ability. Substituting Charles, like a villain as he was, in his own affair with Grace Davoren, he contrived to corroborate the falsehood by the tragic incident of the preceding night. Now, if this would not satisfy Alice of the truth of his own falsehood, nothing could. That Charles was the *intrigant* must be clear and palpable from what had

happened, and accordingly, after taking a serious review of his own iniquity, he felt, as we said, peculiarly gratified with his prospects. Still, it cannot be denied that an occasional shadow, not proceeding from any consciousness of guilt, but from an apprehension of disappointment, would cast its deep gloom across his spirit. With such terrible states of feeling the machinations of guilt, no matter how successful its progress may be, are from time to time attended; and even in his case the torments of the damned were little short of what he suffered, from a dread of failure, and its natural consequences—an exposure which would bar him out of society. Still, his earnest expectation was that the intelligence of the fate of her lover would, considering her feeble state of health, effectually accomplish his wishes, and with this consoling reflection he rode home.

His great anxiety now was, his alarm lest his brother should recover. On reaching Rathfillan House he proceeded to his bedroom, where he found his sister watching.

"My dear Maria," said he, in a low and most affectionate voice, "is he better?"

"I hope so," she replied, in a voice equally low; "this is the first sleep he has got, and I hope it will remove the fever."

"Well, I will not stop," said he, "but do you watch him carefully, Maria, and see that he is not disturbed."

"O, indeed, Harry, you may rest assured that I shall do so. Poor, dear Charles, what would become of us all if we lost him—and Alice Goodwin, too—O, she would die. Now, go, dear Harry, and leave him to me."

Harry left the room apparently in profound sorrow, and, on going into the parlor, met Barney Casey in the hall.

"Barney," said he, "come into the parlor for a moment. My father is out, and my mother is upstairs. I want to know how this affair happened last night, and how it occurred that you were present at it. It's a bad business, Barney."

"Devil a worser," replied Barney, "especially for poor Mr. Charles. I was fortunately goin' down on my *kalie* to the family of poor disconsolate Granua (Grace), when, on passing the clump of alders, I heard screams and shouts to no end. I ran to the spot I heard the skirls comin' from, and there I found Mr. Charles, lyin' as if dead, and Grace Davoren with her hands clasped like a mad woman over him. The strange men then joined us, and carried him home, and that's all I know about it."

"But, can you understand it, Barney? As for me, I cannot. Did Grace say nothing during her alarm?"

"Divil a syllable," replied Barney, lying without remorse; "she was so thunderstruck with what happened that she could do nothing nor say anything but cry out and scream for the bare life of her. They say she has disappeared from her family, and that nobody knows where she has gone to. I was at her father's to-day, and I know they are searchin' the country for her. It is thought she has made away with herself."

"Poor Charles," exclaimed his brother, "what an unfortunate business it has turned out on both sides! I thought he was attached to Miss Goodwin; but it

would appear now that he was deceiving her all along."

"Well, Mr. Harry," replied Barney, dryly, or rather with some severity, "you see what the upshot is; treachery, they say, seldom prospers in the long run, although it may for a while. God forgive them that makes a practice of it. As for Master Charles, I couldn't have dreamt of such a thing."

"Nor I, Barney. I know not what to say. It perplexes me, from whatever point I look at it. At all events, I hope he may recover, and if he does, I trust he will consider what has happened as a warning, and act upon better principles. May God forgive him!"

And so ended their dialogue, little, indeed, to the satisfaction of Harry, whom Barney left in complete ignorance of the significant exclamations by which Grace Davoren, in the alarm of the moment, had betrayed her own guilt, by stating that *Shawn-na-Middogue* had stabbed the wrong man.

Sarah Sullivan—poor, thoughtless, but affectionate girl — on repairing with the thin toast to her mistress's bedroom, felt so brimful of the disaster which had befallen Charles, that—now believing in his guilt, as she did, and with a hope of effectually alienating Alice's affections from him — she lost not a moment in communicating the melancholy intelligence to her.

"O, Miss Alice!" she exclaimed, "have you heard what has happened? O, the false and treacherous villain! Who would believe it? To lave a beautiful *lady* like you, and take up with sich a vulgar vagabone! However, he has suffered for it. *Shawn-na Middogue* did for him."

"What do you mean, Sarah?" said her mistress, much alarmed by such a startling preface; "explain yourself. I do not understand you."

"But you soon will, miss. *Shawn-na-Middogue* found Mr. Charles Lindsay and Grace Davoren together last night, and has stabbed him to death; life's only in him; and that's the gentleman that pretended to love you. Devil's cure to the villain!"

She paused. The expression of her mistress's face was awful. A pallor more frightful than that of death, because it was associated with *life*, overspread her countenance. Her eyes became dim and dull; her features in a moment were collapsed, and resembled those of some individual struck by paralysis—they were altogether without meaning. She clasped and unclasped her hands, like one under the influence of strong hysterical agony; she laid herself back in bed, where she had been sitting up expecting her coffee, her eyes closed, for she had not physical strength even to keep them open, and with considerable difficulty she said, in a low and scarcely audible voice,—"My mother!"

Poor Sarah felt and saw the mischief she had done, and, with streaming eyes and loud sobbings, lost not a moment in summoning Mrs. Goodwin. In truth she feared that her mistress lay dying before her, and was immediately tortured with the remorseful impression that the thoughtless and indiscreet communication she had made was the cause of her death. It is unnecessary to describe the terror and alarm of her mother, nor of her father, when he saw her lying as it were between life and dissolution. The physician was immediately sent for, but, notwithstanding all his remedies, until the

end of the second day, there appeared no change in her. Towards the close of that day an improvement was perceptible; she was able to speak and take some nourishment, but it was observed that she never once made the slightest allusion to the disaster which had befallen Charles Lindsay. She sank into an habitual silence, and, unless when forced to ask for some of those usual attentions which her illness required, she never ventured to indulge in conversation on any subject whatsoever. One thing, however, struck Sarah Sullivan, which was, that in all her startings, both asleep and awake, and in all her unconscious ejaculations, that which appeared to press upon her most was the unceasing horror of the Evil Eye. The name of Charles Lindsay never escaped her, even in the feverish agitation of her dreams, nor in those exclamations of terror and alarm which she uttered.

"O, save me!—save me from his eye—he is killing me! Yes, Woodward is a devil—he is killing me—save me—save me!"

Well had the villain done his work; and how his web of iniquity was woven out we shall see.

On leaving Barney, that worthy gentleman sought his mother, and thus addressed her:—

"Mother," said he, apparently much moved, "this is a melancholy, and I trust in heaven it may not turn out a fatal, business. I'm afraid poor Charles's case is hopeless."

"O, may God forbid, poor boy!" exclaimed Mrs. Lindsay; "for, although he always joined his father against me, still he was in other respects most obliging to every one, and inoffensive to all."

"I know that, and I am sorry that this jade—and she is a handsome jade, they say—should have gained such a cursed influence over him. That, however, is not the question. We must think of nothing now but his recovery. The strictest attention ought to be paid to him; and as it has occurred to me that there is no female under this roof who understands the management of a sick bed, we ought, under these circumstances, to provide a nurse for him."

"Well, indeed, that is true enough, Harry, and it is very kind and considerate of you to think of it; but who will we get? The women here are very ignorant and stupid."

"I have been making inquiries," he replied, "and I am told there is a woman in Rathfillan, named Collins, niece to a religious herbalist or herb doctor, who possesses much experience in that way. It is just such a woman we want."

"Well, then, let her come; do you go and engage her; but see that she will not extort dishonest terms from you, because there is nothing but fraud and knavery among these wretches."

Harry lost little time in securing the services of Caterine Collins, who was that very day established as nurse-tender in Charles Lindsay's sick room.

Alice's illness was now such as left little expectation of her recovery. She was stated, and with good reason, to be in a condition absolutely hopeless; and nothing could exceed the regret and sorrow which were felt for the benevolent and gentle girl. We say *benevolent*, because, since her accession to her newly-acquired property, her charities to the poor and distressed were

bountiful and generous, almost beyond belief; and even during her illness she constituted her father as the agent —and a willing one he was—of her beneficence. In fact, the sorrow for her approaching death was deep and general, and the sympathy felt for her parents such as rarely occurs in life.

Of course it is unnecessary to say that these tidings of her hopeless illness did not reach the Lindsays. On the second morning after Harry's visit he asked for a private interview with his mother, which was accorded to him.

"Mother," said he, "you must pay the Goodwins another visit—a visit, mark you, of sympathy and condolence. You forget all the unpleasant circumstances that have occurred between the families. You forget everything but your anxiety for the recovery of poor, dear Alice."

"But," replied his mother, "I do not wish to go. Why should *I* go to express a sympathy which I do not feel? Her death is only a judicial punishment on them for having inveigled your silly old uncle to leave them the property which would have otherwise come to you as the natural heir."

"Mother," said her dutiful son, "you have a nose, and beyond that nose you never yet have been able to look with anything like perspicuity. If you don't visit them, your good-natured noodle of a husband will, and perhaps the result of that visit may cut us out of the property forever. At breakfast this morning you will propose the visit, which, mark you, is to be made in the name and on behalf of all the family. You, consequently, being the deputation on this occasion, both

your husband and Maria will not feel themselves called upon to see them. You can, besides, say that her state of health precludes her from seeing any one out of her own family, and thus all risk of an explanation will be avoided. It is best to make everything safe; but that she can't live I know, because I feel that my power and influence are upon her, and that the force of this Evil Eye of mine has killed her. I told you this before, I think."

"Even so," said his mother; "it is only what I have said, a judicial punishment for their villany. Villany, Harry, never prospers."

"Egad, my dear mother," he replied, "I know of nothing so prosperous: look through life and you will see the villain thrive upon his fraud and iniquity, where the honest man—the man of integrity, who binds himself by all the principles of what are called honor and morality—is elbowed out of prosperity by the knave, the swindler, and the hypocrite. O, no, my dear mother, the two worst passports to independence and success in life are truth and honesty."

"Well, Harry, I am a bad logician, and will not dispute it with you; but I am far from well, and I don't think I shall be able to visit them for two or three days at least."

"But, in the meantime, express your intention to do so—on behalf of the family, mark; assume your right as the proprietor of this place, and as its representative, and then your visit will be considered as the visit of the whole family. In the meantime, mark me, the girl is dead. I have accomplished that gratifying event, so that, after all, your visit will be a mere

matter of form. When you reach their house you will probably find it the house of death."

"And then," replied his mother, "the twelve hundred a year is yours for life, and the property of your children after you. Thank God!"

That morning at breakfast she expressed her determination to visit the Goodwins, making it, she said, a visit from the family in general; such a visit, she added, as might be proper on their (the Lindsays) part, but yet such an act of neighborhood that, while it manifested sufficient respect for them, would preclude all hopes of any future intercourse between them.

Mr. Lindsay did not relish this much; but as he had no particular wish, in consequence of Charles's illness, to oppose her motives in making the visit, he said she might manage it as she wished—he would not raise a fresh breeze about it. He only felt that he was sincerely sorry for the loss which the Goodwins were about to experience.

CHAPTER XV.

THE BANSHEE.—DISAPPEARANCE OF GRACE DAVOREN.

In the meantime it was certainly an unquestionable fact that Grace Davoren had disappeared, and not even a trace of her could be found. The unfortunate girl, alarmed at the tragic incident of that woful night, and impressed with a belief that Charles Lindsay had been murdered by *Shawn-na-Middogue*, had betaken herself to some place of concealment which no search on behalf of her friends could discover. In fact, her disappearance was involved in a mystery as deep as the alarm and distress it occasioned. But what astonished the public most was the fact that Charles, whose whole life had been untainted by a single act of impropriety, much less of profligacy, should have been discovered in such a heartless and unprincipled intrigue with the daughter of one of his father's tenants, an innocent girl, who, as such, was entitled to protection rather than injury at his hands.

Whilst this tumult was abroad, and the country was in an unusual state of alarm and agitation, Harry Woodward took matters very quietly. That he seemed to feel deeply for the uncertain and dangerous state of his brother, who lay suspended, as it were, between life and death, was evident to every individual of his family. He frequently took Caterine Collins's place, attended him personally, with singular kindness and affection, gave him his drinks and decoctions with his

own hand; and, when the surgeon came to make his daily visit, the anxiety he evinced in ascertaining whether there was any chance of his recovery was most affectionate and exemplary. Still, as usual, he was out at night; but the mystery of his whereabouts, while absent, could never be penetrated. On those occasions he always went armed—a fact which he never attempted to conceal. On one of these nights it so happened that Barney Casey was called upon to attend at the wake of a relation, and, as his master's family were apprised of this circumstance, they did not of course expect him home until a late hour. He left the wake, however, earlier than he had proposed to do, for he found it a rather dull affair, and was on his way home when, to his astonishment, or rather to his horror, he saw Harry Woodward—also on his way home—in close conversation with the supernatural being so well known by description as the *Shan-dhinne-dhuv*, or Black Spectre. Now, Barney was half cowardly and half brave—that is to say, had he lived in an enlightened age he would have felt little terror of supernatural appearances; but at the period of our story such was the predominance of a belief in ghosts, fairies, evil spirits, and witches, that he should have been either less or more than man could he have shaken off the prevailing superstitions, and the gross credulity of the times in which he lived. As it was, he knew not what to think. He remembered the character which had been whispered abroad about Harry Woodward, and of his intercourse with supernatural beings—he was known to possess the Evil Eye; and it was generally understood that those who happened to be endowed

with that accursed gift were aided in the exercises of it by the powers of darkness and of evil. What, then, was he to do? There probably was an opportunity of solving the mystery which hung around the midnight motions of Woodward. If there was a spirit before him, there was also a human being, in living flesh and blood —an acquaintance, too—an individual whom he personally knew, ready to sustain him, and afford, if necessary, that protection which, under such peculiar circumstances, one fellow-creature has a right to expect from another. Now Barney's way home led him necessarily—and a painful necessity it was—near the Haunted House; and he observed that the place where they stood, for they had ceased walking, was about fifty yards above that much dreaded mansion. He resolved, however, to make the plunge and advance, but deemed it only good manners to give some intimation of his approach. He was now within about twenty yards of them, and made an attempt at a comic song, which, however, quivered off into as dismal and cowardly a ditty as ever proceeded from human lips. Harry and the Spectre, both startled by the voice, turned round to observe his approach, when, to his utter consternation, the *Shan-dhinne-dhuv* sank, as it were, into the earth and disappeared. The hair rose upon Barney's head, and when Woodward called out:

"Who comes there?"

He could scarcely summon voice enough to reply:

"It's me, sir," said he; "Barney Casey."

"Come on, Barney," said Woodward, "come on quickly;" and he had scarcely spoken when Barney joined him.

"Barney," said he, "I am in a state of great terror. I have felt ever since I passed that Haunted House as if there was an evil spirit in my company. The feeling was dreadful, and I am very weak in consequence of it. Give me your arm."

"But did you see nothing, sir?" said Barney; "didn't it become visible to you?"

"No," replied the other; "but I felt as if I was in the presence of a supernatural being, and an evil one, too."

"God protect us, Mr. Harry! then, if you didn't see it I did."

"*You* did!" replied the other, startled; "and pray what was it like?"

"Why, a black ould man, sir; and, by all accounts that ever I could hear of it, it was nothing else than the *Shan-dhinne-dhuv*. For God's sake let us come home, sir, for this, if all they say be true, is unholy and cursed ground we're standin' on."

"And where did it disappear?" asked Woodward, leading him by a circuit from the spot where it had vanished.

"Just over there, sir," replied Barney, pointing to the place. "But, in God's name, let us make for home as fast as we can. I'll think every minute an hour till we get safe undher our own roof."

"Barney," said Woodward, solemnly, "I have a request to make of you, and it is this—the common report is, that the spirit in question follows our family—I mean by my mother's side. Now I beg, as you expect my good will and countenance, that, for my sake, and out of respect for the family in general, you will never

breathe a syllable of what you have seen this night. It could answer no earthly purpose, and would only send abroad idle and unpleasant rumors throughout the country. Will you promise this?"

"Of course I promise it," replied Barney; "what object could I gain by repeatin' it?"

"None whatsoever. Well, then, be silent on the subject, and let us reach home as soon as we can."

It would be difficult to describe honest Barney's feelings as they went along. He imagined that he felt Harry's arm tremble within his, and when he thought of the reports concerning the evil spirit, and its connection with Mrs. Lindsay's family, his sensations were anything but comfortable. He tossed and tumbled that night for hours in his bed before he was able to sleep, and when he did sleep the *Shan-dhinne-dhuv* rendered his dreams feverish and frightful.

Precisely at this period, before Mrs. Lindsay had recovered from her indisposition, and could pay her intended visit to the Goodwins, a circumstance occurred which suggested to Harry Woodward one of the most remorseless and satanic schemes that ever was concocted in the heart of man. He was in the habit occasionally of going down to the kitchen to indulge in a smoke and a piece of banter with the servants. One evening, whilst thus amusing himself, the conversation turned upon the prevailing superstitions of the day. Ghosts, witches, wizards, astrologers, fairies, leprechauns, and all that could be termed supernatural, or even related to or aided by it, were discussed at considerable length, and with every variety of feeling. Amongst the rest the Banshee was mentioned,—a spirit of whose pecu-

liar office and character Woodward, in consequence of his long absence from the country, was completely ignorant.

"The Banshee!" he exclaimed; "what kind of a spirit is that? I have never heard of it."

"Why, sir," replied Barney, who was present, "the Banshee — the Lord prevent us from hearin' her — is always the forerunner of death. She attends only certain families — principally the ould Milesians, and mostly Catholics, too; although, I believe, it's well known that she sometimes attends Protestants whose families have been Catholics or Milesians, until the last of the name disappears. So that, afther all, it seems she's not over-scrupulous about religion."

"But what do you mean by attending families?" asked Woodward; "what description of attendance or service does she render them?"

"Indeed, Mr. Harry," replied Barney, "anything but an agreeable attendance. By goxty, I believe every family she follows would be very glad to dispense with her attendance if they could."

"But that is not answering my question, Casey."

"Why, sir," proceeded Barney, "I'll answer it. Whenever the family that she follows is about to have a death in it, she comes a little time before the death takes place, sits either undher the windy of the sick bed or somewhere near the house, and wails and cries there as if her very heart would break. They say she generally names the name of the party that is to die; but there is no case known of the sick person ever recoverin' afther she has given the warnin' of death."

"It is a strange and wild superstition," observed Woodward.

"But a very true one, sir," replied the cook; "every one knows that a Banshee follows the Goodwin family."

"What! the Goodwins of Beech Grove?" said Harry.

"Yes, sir," returned the cook; "they lost six children, and not one of them ever died that she did not give the warnin'."

"If poor Miss Alice heard it," observed Barney, "and she in the state she's in, she wouldn't live twenty-four hours afther it."

"According to what you say," observed Woodward, "that is, if it follows the family, of course it will give the warning in her case also."

"May God forbid," ejaculated the cook, "for it's herself, the darlin' girl, that 'ud be the bitther loss to the poor and destitute."

This kind ejaculation was fervently echoed by all her fellow-servants; and Harry, having finished his pipe, went to see how his brother's wound was progressing. He found him asleep, and Caterine Collins seated knitting a stocking at his bedside. He beckoned her to the lobby, where, in a low, guarded voice, the following conversation took place between them:

"Caterine, have you not a niece that sings well? Barney Casey mentioned her to me as possessing a fine voice."

"As sweet a voice, sir, as ever came from a woman's lips; but the poor thing is delicate and sickly, and I'm afeard not long for this world."

"Could she imitate a Banshee, do you think?"

"If ever woman could, she could. There's not her aquil at the keene, or Irish cry, livin'; she's the only one can bate myself at it."

"Well, Caterine, if you get her to go to Mr. Goodwin's to-morrow night and imitate the cry of the Banshee, I will reward her and you liberally for it. You are already well aware of my generosity."

"Indeed I am, Mr. Woodward; but if either you or I could insure her the wealth of Europe, we couldn't prevail on her to go by herself at night. Except by moonlight she wouldn't venture to cross the street of Rathfillan. As to her, you may put that out of the question. She's very handy, however, about a sick bed, and I might contrive, undher some excuse or other, to get her to take my place for a day or so. But here's your father. We will talk about it again."

She then returned to the sick room, and Harry met Mr. Lindsay on the stairs going up to inquire after Charles.

"Don't go up, sir," said he; "the poor fellow, thank God, is asleep, and the less noise about him the better."

Both then returned to the parlor.

About eleven o'clock the next night Sarah Sullivan was sitting by the bedside of her mistress, who was then, fortunately for herself, enjoying, what was very rare with her, an undisturbed sleep after the terror and agitation of the day, when a low, but earnest and sorrowful wailing was heard, immediately, she thought, under the window. It rose and fell alternately, and at

the close of every division of the cry it pronounced the name of Alice Goodwin in tones of the most pathetic lamentation and woe. The natural heat and warmth seemed to depart out of the poor girl's body; she felt like an icicle, and the cold perspiration ran in torrents from her face.

"My darling misthress," thought she, "it's all over with you at last. There is the sign—the Banshee—and it is well for yourself that you don't hear it, because it would be the death of you at once. However, if I committed one mistake about Misther Charles's misfortune, I will not commit another. You shall never hear of this from me."

The cry was then heard more distant and indistinct, but still loaded with the same mournful expression of death and sorrow; but in a little time it died away in the distance, and was then heard no more.

Sarah, though she had judiciously resolved to keep this awful intimation a secret from Miss Goodwin, considered it her duty to disclose it to her parents. We shall not dwell, however, upon the scene which occurred on the occasion. A belief in the existence and office of the Banshee was, at the period of which we write, almost universally held by the peasantry; and even about half a century ago it was one of the strongest dogmas of popular superstition. After the grief of the parents had somewhat subsided at this dreadful intelligence, Mr. Goodwin asked Sarah Sullivan if his daughter had heard the wail of this prophetic spirit of death; and on her answering in the negative, he enjoined her never to breathe a syllable of the circumstance to her; but she told him she had

come to that conclusion herself, as she felt certain, she said, that the knowledge of it would occasion her mistress's almost immediate death.

"At all events," said her master, "by the doctor's advice we shall leave this place to-morrow morning; he says if she has any chance it will be in a change of air, of society, and of scenery. Everything here has associations and recollections that are painful, and even horrible to her. If she is capable of bearing an easy journey we shall set out for the Spa of Ballyspellan, in the county of Kilkenny. He thinks the waters of that famous spring may prove beneficial to her. If the Banshee, then, is anxious to fulfil its mission it must follow us. They say it always pays three visits, but as yet it has paid us only one."

Mrs. Lindsay had now recovered from her slight indisposition, and resolved to pay the last formal visit to the Goodwins,—a visit which was to close all future intercourse between the families; and our readers are not ignorant of her motives for this, nor how completely and willingly she was the agent of her son Harry's designs. She went in all her pomp, dressed in satins and brocades, and attended by Barney Casey in full livery. Her own old family carriage had been swept of its dust and cobwebs, and put into requisition on this important occasion. At length they reached Beechgrove, and knocked at the door, which was opened by our old friend, Tom Kennedy.

"My good man," she asked, "are the family at home?"

"No, ma'am."

"What! not at home, and Miss Goodwin so ill?—

dying, I am told. Perhaps, in consequence of her health, they do not wish to see strangers. Go and say that Mrs. Lindsay, of Rathfillan House, is here."

"Ma'am, they are not at home; they have left Beech Grove for some time."

"Left Beech Grove!" she exclaimed; "and pray where are they gone to? I thought Miss Goodwin was not able to be removed."

"It was do or die with her," replied Tom. "The doctor said there was but one last chance — change of air, and absence from dangerous neighbors."

"But you did not tell me where they are gone to."

"I did not, ma'am, and for the best reason in life— because I don't know."

"You don't know! Why, is it possible they made a secret of such a matter?"

"Quite possible, ma'am, and to the back o' that they swore every one of us upon the seven gospels never to tell any individual, man or woman, where they went to."

"But did they not tell yourselves?"

"Devil a syllable, ma'am."

"And why, then, did they swear you to secrecy?"

"Why, of course, ma'am, to make us keep the secret."

"But why swear you, I ask you again, to keep a secret which you did not know?"

"Why, ma'am, because they knew that in that case there was litte danger of our committin' parjury; and because every saicret which one does *not* know is sure to be kept."

She looked keenly at him, and added, "I'm inclined to think, sirrah, that you are impertinent."

"Very likely, ma'am," replied Tom, with great gravity. "I've a strong notion of that myself. My father before me was impertinent, and his last dying words to me were, 'Tom, I lay it as a last injunction upon you to keep up the principles of our family, and always to show nothing but impertinence to those who don't deserve respect.'"

With a face scarlet from indignation she immediately ordered the carriage home, but before it had arrived there the intelligence from another source had reached the family, together with the fact that the Banshee had been heard by Mr. Goodwin's servants under Miss Alice's window. Such, indeed, was the fact; and the report of the circumstance had spread through half the parish before the hour of noon next day.

The removal of Alice sank heavily upon the heart of Harry Woodward; it seemed to him as if she had gone out of his grasp, and from under the influence of his eye, for, by whatever means he might accomplish it, he was resolved to keep the deadly power of that eye upon her. He had calculated upon the voice and prophetic wail of the Banshee as being fatal in her then state of health; or was it this ominous and supernatural foreboding of her dissolution that caused them to fly from the place? He reasoned, as the reader may perceive, upon the principle of the Banshee being, according to the superstitious notions entertained of her, a real supernatural visitant, and not the unscrupulous and diabolical imitation of her by Caterine Collins. Still he thought it barely possible that the change of air and the waters of the celebrated spring might recover her, notwithstanding all his inhu-

man anticipations. His brother, also, according to the surgeon's last report, afforded hopes of convalescence. A kind of terror came over him that his plans might fail, because he felt almost certain that if Alice and his brother both recovered, Mr. Lindsay might, or rather *would*, mount his old hobby, and insist on having them married, in the teeth of all opposition on the part of either himself or his mother. This was a gloomy prospect for him, and one which he could not contemplate without falling back upon still darker schemes.

After the night on which Barney Casey had seen him and the Black Spectre together we need scarcely say that he watched Barney closely, nor that Barney watched him with as keen a vigilance. Whatever Woodward may have actually felt upon the subject of the apparition, Barney was certainly undecided as to its reality; or if there existed any bias at all, it was in favor of that reality. Why did Woodward's arm tremble, and why did the man, who was supposed ignorant of fear, exhibit so much terror and agitation on the occasion? Still, on the other hand, there appeared to be a conversation, as it were, between them, and a familiarity of manner considerably at variance with Woodward's version of the circumstances. Be this as it might, he felt it to be a subject on which he could, by no process of reasoning, come to anything like a definite conclusion.

Woodward now determined to consult his mother as to the plan of their future operations. The absence of Alice, and the possible chance of her recovery, rendered it necessary that some new series of projects should

be adopted; but although several had occurred to him, he had not yet come to a definite resolution respecting the selection he would make. With this view he and his conscientious mother closeted themselves in her room, and discussed the state of affairs in the following dialogue:

"Mother," said he, "this escape of Miss Curds-and-whey is an untoward business. What, after all, if she should recover?"

"Recover!" exclaimed the lady; "why, did you not assure me that such an event was impossible, — that you were killing her, and that she must die?"

"So I still think; but so long as the notion of her recovery exists, even only as a dream, so certainly ought we to provide against such a calamity."

"Ah! Harry," she exclaimed, "you may well term it a calamity, for such indeed it would be to you."

"Well, but what do you think ought to be done, my dear mother? I am anxious to have both your advice and opinion upon our future proceedings. Suppose change of air — the waters of that damned brimstone spring, and above all things, the confidence she will derive from the consciousness that she is removed from me and out of my reach — suppose, I say, that all these circumstances should produce a beneficial effect upon her, then how do I stand?"

"Why, with very little hope of the property," she replied; "and then what tenacity of life she has! Why, there are very few girls who would not have been dead long ago, if they had gone through half what she has suffered. Well, you wish to ask me how I would advise you to act?"

"Of course I do."

"Well, then, you have heard the old proverb: It is good to have two strings to one's bow. We shall set all consideration of her aside for a time, and turn our attention to another object."

"What or who is that, mother?"

"You remember I mentioned some time ago the names of a neighboring nobleman and his niece, who lives with him. The man I allude to *was* Lord Bilberry, but *is* now Earl of Cockletown. He was raised to this rank for some services he rendered the government against the tories, who had been devastating the country, and also against some turbulent papists who were supposed to have privately encouraged them in their outrages against Protestant life and property. He was a daring and intrepid man when in his prime of life, and appeared to seek danger for its own sake. He is now an old man, although a young peer, and was always considered eccentric, which he is to the present day. Some people look upon him as a fool, and others as a knave; but in balancing his claims to each, it has never yet been determined on which side the scale would sink. He is the proprietor of a little fishing village on the coast, and on this account he assumed the title of Cockletown; and when he built himself a mansion, as they term it, he would have it called by no other name than that of Cockle Hall. It is true he laughs at the thing himself, and considers it a good joke."

"And so it is," replied her son; "but what about the lady, his niece?"

"Why, she is a rather interesting person."

"Ahem! *person!*"

"Yes, about thirty-four or so; but she will inherit his property."

"And have you any notion of what *that* may amount to?" asked her calculating son.

"I could not exactly say," she replied; "but I believe it is handsome. A great deal of it is mountain, but they say there are large portions of it capable of being reclaimed."

"But how can the estate go to her?"

"Simply because there is no other heir," replied his mother; "they are the last of the family. It is not entailed."

"Thirty-four!" ruminated Woodward. "Well, I have seen very fine girls at thirty-four; but in personal appearance and manner what is she like?"

"Why, perhaps a critical eye might not call her handsome; but the general opinion on that point is in her favor. Her manners are agreeable, so are her features; but it is said that she is fastidious in her lovers, and has rejected many. It is true most of them were fortune-hunters, and deserved no better success."

"But what do you call *me*, mother?"

"Surely not a fortune-hunter, Harry. Is not there your granduncle's large property who is a bachelor, and you are his favorite."

"But don't you know, mother, that, as respects my granduncle, I have confided that secret to you already?"

"I know no such thing, you fool," she replied, looking at him with an expression in her odious eye which could not be described; "I am altogether ignorant of

that fact; but is there not the twelve hundred per annum which reverts to you on the demise of that dying girl?"

"True, my dear mother, true; you are right, I am a fool. Of course I never told you the secret of my disinheritance by the old scoundrel."

"Ah, Harry, I fear you played your cards badly there. You knew he was religious, and yet you should become a seducer; but why make free with his money?"

"Why? Why, because he kept me upon the tight curb; but, as these matters are known only to ourselves, I see you are right. I am still to be considered his favorite—his heir—and am here only on a visit."

"Well, but, Harry, he must have dealt liberally with you on your departure from him?"

"He! Don't you know I was obliged to fly?—to take French leave, I assure you. I reached Rathfillan House with not more than twenty pounds in my pocket."

"But how does it happen that you always appear to have plenty of money?"

"My dear mother, there is a secret there; but it is one which even you shall *not* know,—or come, you *shall* know it. Did you ever hear of a certain supernatural being which follows your family, which supernatural being is known by the name of the Black Spectre, or some such denomination which I cannot remember?"

"I don't wish to hear it named," replied his mother, deeply agitated. "It resembles the Banshee, and never

appears to any one of our family except as a precursor of his death by violence."

Woodward started for a moment, and could not avoid being struck at the coincidence of the same mission having been assigned to the two spirits, and he reflected, with an impression that was anything but agreeable, upon his damnable suggestion of having had recourse to the vile agency of Caterine Collins in enacting the said Banshee, for the purpose of giving the last fatal blow to the almost dying Alice Goodwin. He felt, and he had reason to feel, that there was a mystery about the Black Spectre, which, for the life of him, he could not fathom. He was, however, a firm and resolute man, and after a moment or two's thought he declined to make any further disclosure on the subject, but reverted to the general topic of their conversation.

"Well, mother," said he, "after all, your speculation may not be a bad one; but pray, what is the lady's name?"

"Riddle—Miss Riddle. She is of the Clan-Riddle family, a close relation to the Nethersides of Middletown."

"And a devilish enigmatical name it is," replied her son, "as is that of all her connections."

"Yes, but they were always close and prudent people, who kept their opinions to themselves, and wrought their way in the world with great success, and without giving offence to any party. If you marry her, Harry, I would advise you to enter public life, recommend yourself to the powers that be, and, my word for it, you stand a great chance of having the title of Cockletown revived in your person."

"Well, although the title is a ridiculous one, I should have no objection to it, notwithstanding; but there will certainly arise some difficulty when we come to the marriage settlements. There will be sharp lawyers there, whom we cannot impose upon; and you know, mother, I am without any ostensible property."

"Yes, but we can calculate upon the death of cunning Alice, who, by her undue and flagitious influence over your uncle, left you so."

"Ay, but such a calculation would never do either with her uncle or the lawyers. I think we have nothing to fall back upon, mother, but your own property. If you settle that upon me everything will go right."

"And leave myself depending upon Lindsay? No, no," replied this selfish and penurious woman; "never, Harry—never, never; you must wait until I die for that. But I can tell you what we can do: let us enter upon the negotiation — let us say for the time being that you have twelve hundred a-year, and, while the business is proceeding, what is there to prevent you from going to recruit your health at Ballyspellan, and kill out Alice Goodwin there, as well as if she remained at home? By this plan, before the negotiations are closed, you will be able to meet Miss Riddle with twelve hundred a-year at your back. Alice Goodwin! O, how I hate and detest her — ay, as I do hell!"

"The plan," replied her son, "is an excellent one. We will commence operations with Lord Cockletown and Miss Riddle, in the first place; and having opened the negotiations, as you say, I shall become unwell, and go for a short time to try what efficacy the waters

of Ballyspellan may have on *my* health — or rather on my fortunes."

"We shall visit them to-morrow," said the mother.

"So be it," replied the son; and to this resolution they came, which closed the above interesting dialogue between them. We say interesting, for if it has not been such to the reader, it was so at least to themselves.

CHAPTER XVI.

A HOUSE OF SORROW.—AFTER WHICH FOLLOWS A COURTING SCENE.

THE deep sorrow and desolation of spirit introduced by the profligate destroyer into the humble abode of peace and innocence is an awful thing to contemplate. In our chapter headed "the Wake of a Murderer" we have attempted to give a picture of it. The age, indeed, was one of licentiousness and profligacy. The reigning monarch, Charles the Second, of infamous memory, had set the iniquitous example to his subjects, and surrounded his court by an aristocratic crew, who had scarcely anything to recommend them but their imitation of his vices, and this was always a passport to his favor, whilst virtue, morality, and honor were excluded with contempt and derision. In fact, the corrupt atmosphere of his court carried its contagion throughout the empire, until the seduction of female innocence became the fashion of the day, and no man could consider himself entitled to a becoming position in society who had not distinguished himself by half a dozen criminal intrigues either with the wives or daughters of his acquaintances. When we contemplate

for a moment the contrast between the abandoned court of that royal profligate, and that under which we have the happiness to live,—the one, a sty of infamy, licentiousness, and corruption; the other, a well, undefiled, of purity, virtue, and honor, to whose clear and unadulterated waters nothing equivocal, or even questionable, dares to approach, much less the base or the tainted,—we say that, on instituting this comparison and contrast, the secret of that love and affectionate veneration which we bear to our pure and high-minded Queen, and the pride which we feel in the noble example which she and her Royal Consort have set us, requires no illustration whatsoever. The affection and gratitude of her people are only the meed due to *her* virtues and to *his*. We need not apologize to our readers for this striking contrast. The period and the subject of our narrative, as well as the melancholy scene to which we are about to introduce the reader, rendered it an impossibility to avoid it.

We now proceed to the humble homestead of Torley Davoren; a homestead which we have already described as the humble abode of peace and happiness. Barney Casey, who felt anxious to know from the parents of Grace Davoren whether any trace or tidings of her had been heard of, went to pay the heart-broken family a visit for that purpose. On entering, he found the father seated at his humble hearth, unshaven, and altogether a man careless and negligent of his appearance. He sat with his hands clasped before him, and his heavy eyes fixed on the embers of the peat fire which smouldered on the hearth. The mother was at her distaff, and so were the other two females—to wit, her grandmother

and Grace's sister. But the mother! gracious heaven, what a spirit of distress and misery breathed from those hopeless and agonizing features! There was not only natural sorrow there, occasioned by the disappearance of her daughter, but the shame which resulted from her fall and her infamy; and though last not least, the terrible apprehension that the hapless girl had rushed by suicidal means into the presence of an offended God, "unanointed, unaneled," with all her sins upon her head. Her clothes were hanging from the branches of a large burdock* against the wall, and from time to time the father cast his eyes upon them with a look in which might be read the hollow but terrible expression of despair.

Honest Barney felt his heart deeply moved by all this, and, sooth to say, his natural cheerfulness and lightness of spirit completely abandoned him at the contemplation of the awful anguish which pressed them down. There is nothing which makes such a coward of the heart as the influence of such a scene. He felt that he stood within a circle of misery, and that it was a solemn and serious task even to enter into conversation with them. But, as he had come to make friendly inquiries about the unfortunate girl, he forced himself to break this pitiable but terrible silence of despair.

"I know," said he, with a diffident and melancholy spirit, "that it is painful to you all to make the inqui-

* The branches of the burdock, when it is cut, trimmed, and seasoned, are used by the humble classes to hang their clothes upon. They grow upwards towards the top of the stalk, and, in consequence of this, are capable of sustaining the heaviest garment.

ries that I wish to make; but still let me ask you if you have got any account of *her?*"

The mother's heart had been bursting—pent up as it were—and this allusion to her withdrew the flood-gates of its sorrow; she spread out her arms, and rising up approached her husband, and throwing them about his neck, exclaimed, in tones of the most penetrating grief,—

"O, Torley, Torley, my husband, was she not our dearest and our best?"

The husband embraced her with a flood of tears.

"She was," said he, "she was." But immediately looking upon her sister Dora, he said, "Dora, come here—bring Dora to me," and his wife went over and brought her to him.

"O, Dora dear," said he, "I love you. But, darling, I never loved you as I loved *her*."

"But was *I* ever jealous of that, father?" replied Dora, with tears. "Didn't we all love her? and did any one of you love her more than myself? Wasn't she the pride of the whole family? But I didn't care about her disgrace, father, if we had her back with us. She might repent; and if she did, every one would forgive their favorite—for sure she was every one's favorite; and above all, God would forgive her."

"I loved her as the core of my heart," said the grandmother; "but you spoiled her yourselves, and indulged her too much in dress and everything she wished for. Had you given her less of her own way, and kept her more from dances and merry-makings, it might be better for yourselves and her to-day; still, I grant you, it was hard to do it—for who, *mavrone*,

could refuse *her* anything? O! God sees my heart how I pity you, her father, and you, too, her mother, above all. But, Torley, dear, if we only had her—if we only had her back again safe with us—then what darling Dora says might be true, and her repentance would wash away her shame—for every one loved her, so that they wouldn't judge her harshly."

"I can bear witness to that," said Barney; "as it is, every one pities her, and but very few blame her. It is all set down to her innocence and want of experience, ay, and her youthful years. No; if you could only find her, the shame in regard of what I've said would not be laid heavily upon her by the people."

"O," exclaimed the father, starting up, "O, *Granua, Granua*, my heart's life! where are you from us? Was not your voice the music of our hearth? Did not your light laugh keep us cheerful and happy? But where are you now? O, will no one bring me back my daughter? Where is my child? she that was the light — the breakin' of the summer mornin' amongst us! But wait; they say the villain is recoverin' that destroyed her — well — he may recover from the blow of *Shawn-na-Middogue*, but he will get a blow from me that he won't recover from. I will imitate Morrissy — and will welcome his fate."

"Aisy, Torley," said Casey; "hould in a little. You are spakin' now of Masther Charles?"

"I am, the villain! warn't they found together?"

"I have one question to ask you," proceeded Barney, "and it is this — when did you see or spake with *Shawn-na-Middogue?*"

"Not since that unfortunate night."

"Well, all I can tell you is this — that Masther Charles had as much to do with the ruin of your daughter as the king o' Jerusalem. Take my word for that. He is not the stuff that such a villain is made of, but I suspect who is."

"And who do you suspect, Barney?"

"I say I only suspect; but, so long as it is only suspicion, I will mention no names. It wouldn't be right; and for that reason I will wait until I have betther information. But, after all," he proceeded, "maybe nothing wrong has happened."

The mother shook her head: "I know to the contrairy," she replied, "and intended on that very night to bring her to an account about her appearance, but I never had the opportunity."

The father here wrung his hands, and his groans were dreadful.

"Could you see *Shawn-na-Middogue?*" asked Barney.

"No," replied Davoren; "he, too, has disappeared; and although he is hunted like a bag-fox, nobody can find either hilt or hair of him."

"Might it not be possible that she is with him?" he asked again.

"No, Barney," replied her mother, "we know Shawn too well for that. He knows how we loved her, and what we would suffer by her absence. Shawn, though driven to be an outlaw, has a kind heart; and would never allow us to suffer what we are sufferin' on her account. O, no! we know Shawn too well for that."

"Well," replied Barney, meditatively, "there's one thing I'm inclined to think: that whoever was the

means of bringing shame and disgrace upon poor *Granua* will get a touch of his middogue that won't fail as the first did. Shawn now knows his man, and, with the help of God, I hope he won't miss his next blow. I must now go; and before I do, let me tell you that, as I said before, Masther Charles is as innocent of the shame brought upon poor *Granua* as the king o' Jerusalem."

There is a feeling of deep but silent sorrow which weighs down the spirit after the death of some beloved individual who is taken away from among the family circle. It broods upon, and casts a shadow of the most profound gloom over the bereaved heart; but let a person who knew the deceased, and is capable of feeling a sincere and friendly sympathy for the survivors, enter into this circle of sorrow; let him or her dwell upon the memory of the departed; then that silent and pent-up grief bursts out, and the clamor of lamentation is loud and vehement. It was so upon this occasion. When Barney rose to take his departure, a low murmur of grief assailed his ears; it gradually became more loud; it increased; it burst into irrepressible violence—they wept aloud; they flew to her clothes, which hung, as we said, motionless upon the stalk of burdock against the wall; they kissed them over and over again; and it was not until Barney, now deeply affected, succeeded in moderating their sorrow, that these strong and impassioned paroxysms were checked and subdued into something like reasonable grief. Having consoled and pacified them as far as it was in his power, he then took his departure under a feeling of deep regret that no account of the unfortunate girl had been obtained.

The next day Mrs. Lindsay and Harry prepared to pay the important visit. As before, the old family carriage was furbished up, and the lady once more enveloped in her brocades and satins. Harry, too, made it a point to appear in his best and most becoming habiliments; and, truth to tell, an exceedingly handsome and well-made young fellow he was. The dress of the day displayed his manly and well-proportioned limbs to the best advantage, whilst his silver-hilted sword, in addition to the general richness of his costume, gave him the manner and appearance of an accomplished cavalier. Barney's livery was also put a second time into requisition, and the coachman's cocked hat was freshly crimped for the occasion.

"Is it true, mother?" inquired Harry, as they went along, "that this old noodle has built his residence as much after the shape of a cockle-shell as was possible to be accomplished?"

"Perfectly true, as you will see," she replied.

"But what could put such a ridiculous absurdity into his head?"

"Because he thought of the name before the house was built, and he got it built simply to suit the name. 'There is no use,' said he, 'in calling it Cockle Hall unless it resembles a cockle;' and, indeed, when you see it, you will admit the resemblance."

"Egad," said her son, "I never dreamed that fate was likely to cramp me in a cockle-shell. I dare say there is a touch of sublimity about it. The associations are in favor of it."

"No," replied his mother, "but it has plenty of comfort and convenience about it. The plan was his

own, and he contrived to make it, notwithstanding its ludicrous shape, one of the most agreeable residences in the country. He is a blunt humorist, who drinks a good deal, and instead of feeling offence at his manner, which is rather rough, you will please him best by answering him exactly in his own spirit."

"I am glad you gave me this hint," said her son; "I like that sort of thing, and it will go hard if I don't give him as good as he brings."

"In that case," replied the mother, "the chances will be ten to one in your favor. Seem, above all things, to like his manner, because the old fool is vain of it, and nothing gratifies him so much."

"But about the niece? What is to be the cue there, mother?"

"The cue of a gentleman, Harry,—of a well-bred and respectful gentleman. You may humor the old fellow to the top of his bent; but when you become the gentleman with her, she will not misinterpret your manner with her uncle, but will look upon the transition as a mark of deference to herself. And now you have your instructions: be careful and act upon them. Miss Riddle is a girl of sense, and, they say, of feeling; and it is on this account, I believe, that she is so critical in scrutinizing the conduct and intellect of her lovers. So there is my last hint."

"Many thanks, my dear mother; it will, I think, be my own fault if I fail with either uncle or niece, supported as I shall be by your eloquent advocacy."

On arriving at Cockle Hall, Harry, on looking out of the carriage window, took it for granted that his mother had been absolutely bantering him. "Cockle

Hall!" he exclaimed; "why, curse the hall I see here, good, bad, or indifferent. What did you mean, mother? Were you only jesting?"

"Keep quiet," she replied, "and above all things don't seem surprised at the appearance of the place. Look precisely as if you had been in it ever since it was built."

The appearance of Cockle Hall was, indeed, as his mother had very properly informed him, ludicrous in the extreme. It was built on a surface hollowed out of a high bank, or elevation, with which the roof of it was on a level. It was, of course, circular and flat, and the roof drooped, or slanted off towards the rear, precisely in imitation of a cockle-shell. There was, however, a complete *deceptio visus* in it. To the eye, in consequence of the peculiarity of its position, it appeared to be very low, which, in point of fact, was not exactly the case, for it consisted of two stories, and had comfortable and extensive apartments. There was a paved space wide enough for two carriages to pass each other, which separated it from the embankment that surrounded it. Altogether, when taken in connection with the original idea of its construction, it was a difficult thing to look at it without mirth. On entering the drawing-room, which Harry did alone— for his mother, having seen Miss Riddle in the parlor, entered it in order to have a preliminary chat with her — her son found a person inside dressed in a pair of red plush breeches, white stockings a good deal soiled, a yellow long-flapped waistcoat, and a wig, with a cue to it which extended down the whole length of his back, — evidently a servant in dirty livery. There

was something *degagée* and rather impudent in his manner and appearance, which Harry considered as in good keeping with all he had heard of this eccentric nobleman. Like master like man, thought he.

"Well," said the servant, looking hardly at him, "what do you want?"

"You be cursed," replied Harry; "don't be impertinent; do you think I'm about to disclose my business to you, you despicable menial? Why don't you get your stockings washed? But if you wish to know what I want, I want your master."

The butler, footman, or whatever he might have been, fixed a keen look upon him, accompanied by a grin of derision that made the visitor's gorge rise a good deal.

"My master," said the other, "is not under this roof. What do you think of that?"

"You mean the old cockle is not in his shell, then," replied Harry.

"Come," said the other, with a chuckle of enjoyment, "curse me, but that's good. Who are you? —what are you? You are in good feathers—only give an account of yourself."

Harry was a keen observer, but was considerably aided by what he had heard from his mother. The rich rings, however, which he saw sparkling on the fingers of what he had conceived to be the butler or footman, at once satisfied him that he was then addressing the worthy nobleman himself. In the meantime, having made this discovery, he resolved to act the farce out.

"Why should I give an account of myself to you,

you cursed old sot?—you drink, sirrah: I can read it in your face."

"I say, give an account of yourself; what's your business here?"

"Come, then," replied Harry, "as you appear to be a comical old scoundrel, I don't care, for the joke's sake, if I do. I am coming to court Miss Riddle, ridiculous old Cockletown's niece."

"Why are you coming to court her?"

"Because I understand she will have a good fortune after old Cockle takes his departure."

"Eh, confound me, but that's odd; why, you are a devilish queer fellow. Did you ever see Lord Cockletown?"

"Not I," replied Harry; "nor I don't care a curse whether I do or not, provided I had his niece secure."

"Did you ever see the niece?"

"Don't annoy me, sirrah. No, I didn't; neither do I care if I never did, provided I secure old Cockle's money and property. If it could be so managed, would prefer being married to her in the dark."

The old peer walked two or three times through the room in a kind of good-humored perplexity, raising his wig and scratching his head under it, and surveying Woodward from time to time with a serio-comic expression.

"Of course you are a profligate, for that is the order of the day?"

"Why, of course I am," replied Harry.

"Any intrigues—eh?"

"Indeed," replied the other, pulling a long face, "I am ashamed to answer you on that subject.

Intrigues! I regret to say only half a dozen yet, but my prospects in that direction are good."

"Have you fought? Did you ever commit murder?"

"It can scarcely be called by that name. It was in tavern brawls: one was a rascally cockleman, and the other a rascally oysterman."

"How did you manage the oysterman? With a knife, eh?"

"No, sirrah; with my sword I did him open."

"Have you any expectation of being hanged?"

"Why, according to the life I have led, I think there is every probability that I may reach that honorable position."

The old peer could bear this no longer. He burst out into a loud laugh, which lasted upwards of two minutes.

"Faith," said Harry, "if you had such a prospect before you, I don't think you would consider it such a laughing matter."

"Curse you, sir, do you know who I am?"

"Curse yourself, sir," replied the other, "no, I don't; how should I, when I never saw you before?"

"Sir, *I* am Lord Cockletown."

"And, sir, I am Harry Woodward, son—favorite son—to Mrs. Lindsay of Rathfillan House."

"What! are you a son of that old fagot?"

"Her favorite son, as I said; that old fagot, sir, is my mother."

"Ay, but who was your father?" asked his lordship, with a grin, "for that's the rub."

"That *is* the rub," said Woodward, laughing; "how the devil can I tell?"

"Good again," said his lordship; "confound me but you are a queer one. I tell you what, I like you."

"I don't care a curse whether you do or not, provided your niece does."

"Are you the fellow that has been abroad, and returned home lately?"

"I am the very *fellow*," replied Woodward, with a ludicrous and good-humored emphasis upon the word *fellow*.

"There was a bonfire made for you on your return?"

"There was, my lord."

"And there fell a shower of blood upon that occasion?"

"Not a doubt of it, my lord."

"Well, you are a strange fellow altogether. I have not for a long time met a man so much after my own heart."

"That is because our dispositions resemble each other. If I had the chance of a peerage, I would be as original as your lordship in the selection of my title; but I trust I shall be gratified in that, too; because, if I marry your niece, I will enter into public life, make myself not only a useful, but a famous man, and, of course, the title of Cockletown will be revived in my person, and will not perish with you. No, my lord, should I marry your niece, your title shall descend with your blood, and there is something to console you."

"Come," said the old peer, "shake hands. Have you a capacity for public business?"

"I was born for it, my lord. I feel that fact; besides, I have a generous ambition to distinguish myself."

"Well," said the peer, "we will talk all that over in a few days. But don't you admit that I am an eccentric old fellow?"

"And doesn't your lordship admit that I am an eccentric young fellow?"

"Ay, but, harkee, Mr. Woodward," said the peer, "I always sleep with one eye open."

"And I," replied Harry, "sleep with both eyes open."

"Come, confound me, that beats me, you must get on in life, and I will consider your pretensions to my niece."

At this moment his mother and Miss Riddle entered the drawing-room, which, notwithstanding the comical shape of the mansion, was spacious, and admirably furnished. Miss Riddle's Christian name was Thomasina; but her eccentric uncle never called her by any other appellation than Tom, and occasionally Tommy.

"Mrs. Lindsay, uncle," said the girl, introducing her.

"Eh? Mrs. Lindsay! O! how do you do, Mrs. Lindsay? How is that unfortunate devil, your husband?"

Now Mrs. Lindsay was one of those women who, whenever there was a selfish object in view, could not only suppress her feelings, but exhibit a class of them in direct opposition to those she actually felt.

"Why unfortunate, my lord?" she asked, smiling.

"Why, because I am told he plays second fiddle at home, and a devilish deal out of tune, too, in general. You play first, ma'am; but they say, notwithstanding, that there's a plentiful lack of harmony in your concerts."

"Ah," she replied, "your lordship must still have your joke, I perceive; but, at all events, I am glad to see you in such spirits."

"Well, you may thank your son for that. I say, Tom," he added, addressing his niece, "he's a devilish good fellow; a queer chap, and I like him. Woodward, this is Tom Riddle, my niece. This scamp, Tom, is that woman's son, Mr. Woodward. He's an accomplished youth: I'll be hanged if he isn't. I asked him how many intrigues he has had, and he replied, with a dolorous face, only half a dozen yet. He only committed two murders, he says; and when I asked him if he thought there was any probability of his being hanged, he replied that, from a review of his past life, and what he contemplated in the future, he had little doubt of it."

Harry Woodward was, indeed, a most consummate tactician. From the moment Miss Riddle entered the room, his air and manner became that of a most polished gentleman; and after bowing to her when introduced, he cast, from time to time, a glance at her, which told her, by its significance, that he had only been gratifying her uncle by playing into his whims and eccentricities. In the meantime the heart of Mrs. Lindsay bounded with delight at the progress which she saw, by the complacent spirit of the old peer, honest and adroit Harry had made in his good opinion.

"Miss Riddle," said he, "his lordship and I have been bantering each other; but although I considered myself what I may term an able hand at it, yet I find I am no match for him."

"Well, not exactly, I believe," replied his lordship; "but, notwithstanding, you are one of the best I have met."

"Why, my lord," replied Woodward, "I like the thing; and, indeed, I never knew any one fond of it who did not possess a good heart and a candid disposition; so, you see, my lord, there is a compliment for each of us."

"Yes, Woodward, and we both deserve it."

"I trust, Mr. Woodward," observed his niece, "that you don't practise your abilities as a banterer upon our sex."

"Never! Miss Riddle; that would be ungenerous and unmanly. There is nothing due to your sex but respect, and that, you know, is incompatible with banter. The wit that could wantonly sport with the modesty of woman degenerates into impudence and insult;" and he accompanied the words with a low and graceful bow.

This young fellow, thought Miss Riddle, is a gentleman.

"Yes, but, Mr. Woodward, we sometimes require a bantering; and, what is more, a remonstrance. We are not perfect, and surely it is not the part of a friend to overlook our foibles or our errors."

"True, Miss Riddle, but it is not by bantering they will be reclaimed. A friendly remonstrance, delicately conveyed, is one thing, but the buffoonery of a banter is another."

"What's that?" said the peer, "buffoonery! I deny it, sir; there is no buffoonery in banter."

"Not, my lord, when it occurs between gentlemen,"

replied Woodward, "but, you know, with ladies it is a different thing."

"Ay, well, that's not bad; a proper distinction. I tell you what, Woodward, you are a clever fellow; and I'm not sure but I'll advocate your cause with Tom there. Tom, he tells me he is coming to court you, and he says he doesn't care a fig about either of us, provided he could secure your fortune. Ay, and, what's more, he says that if you and he are married, he hopes it will be in the dark. What do you think of that now?"

Miss Riddle did not blush, nor affect a burst of indignation, but she said what pleased both Woodward and his mother far better.

"Well, uncle," she replied, calmly, "even if he did say so, I believe he only expressed in words what most, if not all, of my former lovers actually felt, but were too cautious to acknowledge."

"I trust, Miss Riddle," said Harry, smiling graciously, "that I am neither so silly nor so stupid as to defend a jest by anything like a serious apology. You will also be pleased to recollect that, as an argument for my success, I admitted two murders, half a dozen intrigues, and the lively prospect of being hanged. The deuce is in it, if these are not strong qualifications in a lover, especially in a lover of yours, Miss Riddle."

The reader sees that the peer was anything but a match for Woodward, who contrived, and with perfect success, to turn all his jocular attacks to his own account.

Miss Riddle smiled, for the truth was that Harry began to rise rapidly in her good opinion. His sprightli

ness was gentlemanly and agreeable, and he contrived, besides, to assume the look and air of a man who only indulged in it in compliment to her uncle, and, of course, indirectly to herself, with whom, it was but natural, he should hope to make him an advocate. Still the expression of his countenance, as he managed it, appeared to her to be that of a profound and serious thinker — one whose feelings, when engaged, were likely to retain a strong hold of his heart. That he should model his features into such an expression is by no means strange, when we reflect with what success hypocrisy can stamp upon them all those traits of character for which she wishes to get credit from the world.

"Come, Tom," said his lordship, "it's time for luncheon; we can't allow our friends to go without refreshments. I say, Woodward, I'm a hospitable old fellow; did you ever know that before?"

"I have often heard it, my lord," replied the other, "and I hope to have still better proof of it." This was uttered with a significant, but respectful glance, at the niece, who was by no means displeased at it.

"Ay! ay!" said his lordship, laughing, "the proof of the pudding is in the eating. Well, you shall have an opportunity, and soon, too; you appear to be a blunt, honest fellow; and hang me but I like you."

Miss Riddle now went out to order in the refreshments, but not without feeling it strange how her uncle and herself should each contemplate Woodward's character in so different a light—the uncle looking upon him as a blunt, honest fellow, whilst to her he appeared as a man of sense, and a perfect gentleman. Such,

however, was the depth of his hypocrisy, that he succeeded at once in pleasing both, and in deceiving both.

"Well, Woodward, what do you think of Tom?" asked his lordship.

"Why, my lord, that she is an admirable and lovely girl."

"Well, you are right, sir; Tom is an admirable girl, and loves her old uncle as if he was her father, or maybe a great deal better; she will have all I am worth when I pop off, so there's something for you to think upon."

"No man, my lord, capable of appreciating her could think of anything but herself."

"What! not of her property?"

"Property, my lord, is a very secondary subject when taken into consideration with the merits of the lady herself. I am no enemy to property, and I admit its importance as an element of happiness when reasonably applied, but I am neither sordid nor selfish; and I know how little, after all, it contributes to domestic enjoyment, unless accompanied by those virtues which constitute the charm of connubial life."

"Confound me but you must have got that out of a book, Woodward."

"Out of the best book, my lord,—the book of life and observation."

"Why, curse it, you are talking philosophy, though."

"Only common sense, my lord."

His lordship, who was walking to and fro in the room, turned abruptly round, looked keenly at him, and then, addressing Mrs. Lindsay, said,—

"Why, upon my soul, Mrs. Lindsay, we must try

and do something with this fellow; he'll be lost to the world if we don't. Come, I say, we must make a public man of him."

"To become a public man is his own ambition, my lord," replied Mrs. Lindsay; "and although I am his mother, and may feel prejudiced in his favor, still I agree with your lordship that it is a pity to see such abilities as his unemployed."

"Well, madam, we shall consider of it. What do you think, Woodward, if we made a bailiff of you?"

At this moment Miss Riddle entered the room just in time to hear the question.

"The very thing, my lord; and the first capture I should make would be Miss Riddle, your fair niece here."

"Curse me, but the fellow's a cat," said the peer, laughing. "Throw him as you will, he always falls upon his legs. What do you think, Tom? Curse me but your suitor here talked philosophy in your absence."

"Only common sense, Miss Riddle," said Harry. "Philosophy, it is said, excludes feeling; but that is not a charge which I ever heard brought against common sense."

"I am an enemy neither to philosophy nor common sense," replied his niece, "because I think neither of them incompatible with feeling; but I certainly prefer common sense."

"There's luncheon announced," said the peer, rubbing his hands, "and that's a devilish deal more comfortable than either of them. Come, Mrs. Lindsay; Woodward, take Tom with you."

They then descended to the dining-room, where the conversation was lively and amusing, the humorous old peer furnishing the greater proportion of the mirth.

"Mrs. Lindsay," said he, as they were preparing to go, "I hope, after all, that this clever son of yours is not a fortune-hunter."

"He need not be so, my lord," replied his mother, "and neither is he. He himself will have a handsome property."

"*Will* have. I would rather you wouldn't speak in the future tense, though. Woodward," he added, addressing that gentleman, "remember I told you that I sleep with one eye open."

"If you have any doubts, my lord, on this subject," replied Woodward, "you may imitate me: sleep with both open."

"Ay, as the hares do, and devil a bit they're the better for it; but, in the meantime, what property have you, or will you have? There is nothing like coming to the point."

"My lord," replied Woodward, "I respect Miss Riddle too much to enter upon such a topic in her presence. You must excuse me, then, for the present; but if you wish for precise information on the subject, I refer you to my mother, who will, upon a future occasion—and I trust it will be soon—afford you every satisfaction on this matter."

"Well," replied his lordship, "that is fair enough—a little vague, indeed—but no matter, your mother and I will talk about it. In the meantime you are a devilish clever fellow, and, as I said, I like you; but still

I will suffer no fortune-hunter to saddle himself upon my property. I repeat it, I sleep with one eye open. I will be happy to see you soon, Mr. Woodward; but remember I will be determined on this subject altogether by the feelings of my niece Tom here."

"I have already said, my lord," replied Woodward, "that, except as a rational element in domestic happiness, I am indifferent to the consideration or influence of property. The prevailing motives with me are the personal charms, the character, and the well-known virtues of your niece. It is painful to me to say even this in her presence, but your lordship has forced it from me. However, I trust that Miss Riddle understands and will pardon me."

"Mr. Woodward," she observed, "you have said nothing unbecoming a gentleman; nothing certainly but that which you could not avoid saying."

After the usual forms of salutation at parting, Harry and his mother entered the old carriage and proceeded on their way home.

"Well, Harry," said his mother, "what do you think?"

"A hit," he replied; "a hit with both, but especially with the niece, who certainly is a fine girl. If there is to be any opposition, it will be with that comical old buffoon, her uncle. He says he sleeps with one eye open, and I believe it. You told me it could not be determined whether he was more fool or knave; but, from all I have seen of him, the devil a bit of fool I can perceive, but, on the contrary, a great deal of the knave. Take my word for it, old Cockletown is not to be imposed upon."

"Is there no likelihood of that wretch, Alice Goodwin, dying?" said his mother.

"That is a case I must take in hand," returned the son. "I shall go to Ballyspellan and put an end to her. After that we can meet old Cockletown with courage. I feel that I am a favorite with his niece, and she, you must have perceived, is a favorite with him, and can manage him as she wishes, and that is one great point gained—indeed, the greatest."

"No," replied his mother, "the greatest is the death of Alice Goodwin."

"Be quiet," said her worthy son; "that shall be accomplished."

CHAPTER XVII.

DESCRIPTION OF THE ORIGINAL TORY.—THEIR MANNER OF SWEARING.

We have introduced an Irish outlaw, or tory, in the person of *Shawn-na-Middogue*, and, as it may be necessary to afford the reader a clearer insight into this subject, we shall give a short sketch of the character and habits of the wild and lawless class to which he belonged. The first description of those savage banditti that has come down to us with a distinct and characteristic designation, is known as that of the wild band of tories who overran the South and West of Ireland both before the Revolution and after it. The actual signification of the word *tory*, though now, and for a long time, the appellative of a political party, is

scarcely known except to the Irish scholar and historian. The term proceeds from the Irish noun *toir*, a pursuit, a chase; and from that comes its cognate, *toirce*, a person chased, or pursued—thereby meaning an *outlaw*, from the fact that the individuals to whom it was first applied were such as had, by their murders and robberies, occasioned themselves to be put beyond the protection of all laws, and, consequently, were considered outlaws, or *tories*, and liable to be shot down without the intervention of judge or jury, as they often were, wherever they could be seen or apprehended. We believe the word first assumed its distinct character in the wars of Cromwell, as applied to the wild freebooters of Ireland.

Tory-hunting was at one time absolutely a pastime in Ireland, in consequence of this desperate body of people having proved the common enemy of every class, without reference to either religious or political distinction. We all remember the old nursery song, which, however simple, is very significant, and affords us an excellent illustration of their unfortunate condition, and the places of their usual retreat.

> "I'll tell you a story about Johnny Magrory,
> Who went *to the wood* and shot a tory;
> I'll tell you another about his brother,
> Who went *to the wood* and shot another."

From this it is evident that the tories of the time of Cromwell and Charles the Second were but the lineal descendants of the thievish wood kernes mentioned by Spenser, or at least the inheritors of their habits. Defoe attributes the establishment of the word in England to the infamous Titus Oates.

"There was a meeting," says he, "(at which I was present) in the city, upon the occasion of the discovery of some attempt to stifle the evidence of the witnesses (about the Popish plot), and tampering with Bedlow and Stephen Dugdale. Among the discourse Mr. Bedlow said 'he had letters from Ireland; that there were some tories to be brought over hither, who were privately to murder Dr. Oates and the said Bedlow.' The doctor, whose zeal was very hot, could never hear any man after this talk against the plot, or against the witnesses, but he thought he was one of the tories, and called almost every man who opposed him in his discourse a tory — till at last the word became popular."

Hume's account of it is not very much different from this.

"The court party," says he, "reproached their antagonists with their affinity to the fanatical conventiclers of Scotland, who were known by the name of Whigs.* The country party found a resemblance between the courtiers and the Popish banditti in Ireland, on whom the appellation of tory was affixed. And after this manner these foolish terms of reproach came into public and general use."

It is evident, from Irish history, that the original tories, politically speaking, belonged to no party whatever. They were simply thieves, robbers, and murderers on their own account. Every man's hand was against them, and certainly their hands were against

* The word *whig* is taken from the fact, that in Scotland it was applied to milk that had become *sour;* and to this day milk that has lost its sweetness is termed by the Scotch, and their descendants in the north of Ireland, *whigged milk.*

every man. The fact is, that in consequence of the predatory nature of Irish warfare, which plundered, burned, and devastated as it went along, it was impossible that thousands of the wretched Irish should not themselves be driven by the most cruel necessity, for the preservation of their lives and of those of their families, to become thieves and plunderers in absolute self-defence. Their habitations, such as they were, having been destroyed and laid in ruins, they were necessarily driven to seek shelter in the woods, caves, and other fastnesses of the country, from which they issued forth in desperate hordes, armed as well as they could, to rob and to plunder for the very means of life. Goaded by hunger and distress of every kind, those formidable and ferocious "wood kernes" only paid the country back, by inflicting on it that plunder and devastation which they had received at its hands. Neither is it surprising that they should make no distinction in their depredations, because they experienced, to their cost, that no "hosting," on either or any side, ever made a distinction with them. Whatever hand was uppermost, whether in the sanguinary struggles of their rival chiefs, or in those between the Irish and English, or Anglo-Irish, the result was the same to them. If they were not robbed or burned out to-day, they might be to-morrow; and under such circumstances to what purpose could they be expected to exercise industrious or laborious habits, when they knew that they might go to bed in comfort at night, and rise up beggars in the morning? It is easy to see, then, that it was the lawless and turbulent state of the country that reduced them to such a mode of life, and

drove them to make reprisals upon the property of others, in the absence of any safe or systematic way of living. There is no doubt that a principle of revenge and retaliation animated their proceedings, and that they stood accountable for acts of great cruelty and murder, as well as of robbery. The consequence necessarily was, that they felt themselves beyond the protection of all law, and fearfully distinct in the ferocity of their character from the more civilized population of the country, which waged an exterminating warfare against them under the sanction and by the assistance of whatever government existed.

It was about the year 1689 that they began to assume or be characterized by a different designation—we mean that of rapparees; so called, it is said, from the fact of their using the half pike or short rapier; although, for our part, we are inclined to think that they were so termed from the word *rapio*, to plunder, which strikes us as the most appropriate and obvious. At all events it is enough to say that the *tories* were absorbed in the rapparees, and their name in Ireland and Great Britain, except as a political class, was forgotten and lost in that of the rapparees, who long survived them.

Barney Casey was, as the reader must have perceived, a young fellow of good sense and very acute observation. He had been, since an early period of his youth, domesticated in the family of Mr. Lindsay, who respected him highly for his attachment and integrity. He had a brother, however, who, with his many good qualities, was idle and headstrong. His name was Michael, and, sooth to say, the wild charm of a freebooter's life, in addition to his own indisposition to

labor for his living, were more than the weak materials of his character could resist. He consequently joined *Shawn-na-Middogue* and his gang, and preferred the dangerous and licentious life of a robber and plunderer to that of honesty and labor—precisely as many men connected with a seafaring life prefer the habits of the smuggler or the pirate to those of the more honorable and legitimate profession. Poor Barney exerted all his influence with his brother with a hope of rescuing him from the society and habits of his dissolute companions, but to no purpose. It was a life of danger and excitement—of plans, and projects, and changes, and chases, and unexpected encounters—of retaliation and, occasionally, the most dreadful revenge. Such, however, was the state of society at that time, that those persons who had connected themselves with these desperate outlaws were by no means afraid to pay occasional visits to their own relatives, and from time to time to hold communication with them. Nay, not only was this the fact, but, what is still more strange, many persons who were related to individuals connected with this daring and unmanageable class were in the habit of attending their nightly meetings, sometimes for the purpose of preventing a robbery, or of *setting* a family whom they wished to suffer.

One night, during this period of our narrative, Barney's brother contrived to have a secret interview with him for the purpose of communicating some information to him which had reached his ears from *Shawn-na-Middogue*, to the effect that Caterine Collins had admitted to him (Shawn), upon his promise of marrying her—a promise made only for the purpose of getting

into her confidence, and making her useful as an agent to his designs—that she knew, she said, that it was not his brother Charles who had brought unfortunate Grace Davoren to ruin, but Harry Woodward, and, she added, when it was too late, she suspected something from his manner, of his intention to send Charles, on that disastrous night, in his stead. But Shawn, who knew Caterine and her connections well, recommended Michael Casey to apprise his brother that he could not keep too sharp an eye upon the movements of both, but, above all things, to try and induce him to *set* Woodward in such a way that he could repair the blow upon him, which, in mistake, he had dealt to his innocent brother. Now, although Barney almost detested Woodward, yet he was incapable of abetting Shawn's designs upon *Suil Balor*.

"No," said he to his brother, "I would die first. It is true I do not like a bone in his body, but I will never lend myself to such a cowardly act as that; besides, from all I know of Shawn, I did not think he would stoop to murder."

"Ay, but think of our companions," replied his brother, " and think, too, of what a notion *they* have of it. Shawn, however, is a different man from most, if not all, of them — and he says he was urged on by a fit of fury when he found the man, that he thought the destroyer of Grace Davoren, speaking to her in such a lonely and suspicious place. It was his intention to have bidden him to stand on his guard and defend himself, but jealousy and revenge overcame him at the moment, and he struck the blow. Thank God that it failed; but you may take my word that the next

won't — because Shawn now swears, that without preface or apology, or one moment's warning, he will stab him to the heart wherever he can meet him."

"It's a bad life," replied Barney, "that Shawn's leading; but, poor fellow, he and his resaved hard treatment — their house and place torn down and laid in ruins, and instead of protection from government, they found themselves proclaimed outlaws. What could he and they do? But, Michael, it was a different thing with you. Our family were comfortable — too much so, indeed, for you; you got idle habits and a distaste for work, and so, rather than settle down to industry, you should join them."

"Ay, and so would you, if you knew the life we lead."

"That might be," replied his brother, "if I didn't happen to think of the death you die."

"As to that," said Michael, "we have all made up our minds; shooting and hanging will get nothing out of us but the death-laugh at our enemies."

"Ay, enemies of your own making," said Barney; "but as to the death-laugh on the gallows, remember that that is at your own expense. It will be what we call on the wrong side of the mouth, I think. But in regard of these nightly meetings of yours, I would have no objection to see one of them. Do you think I would be allowed to join you for an hour or two, that I might hear and see what you say and do?"

"You may, Barney; but you know it isn't every one that would get that privilege; but in ordher to make sure, I'll spake to Shawn about it. Leave is light, they say; and as he knows you're not likely to

turn a spy upon our hands, I'm certain he won't have any objection."

"When and where will you meet next?" asked Barney.

"On the very spot where Shawn struck his middogue into the body of Masther Charles," replied his brother. "Shawn has some oath of revenge to make against Woodward, because he suspects that the villain knows where poor Granua Davoren is."

"Well, on that subject he may take his own coorse," replied Barney; "but as for me, Michael, I neither can nor will think of the murdher of a fellow-crature, no matther how wicked he may be, especially when I know that it is planned for him. As a man and a Christian, I cannot lend myself to it, and of coorse —but this is between ourselves — I will put Mr. Woodward on his guard."

Those were noble sentiments, considering the wild and licentious period of which we write, and the dreadfully low estimate at which human life was then held.

"Act as you like," replied Michael; "but this I can tell you, and this I *do* tell you, that if, for the safety of this villain, you take a single step that may bring *Shawn-na-Middogue* into danger, if you were my brother ten times over I will not prevent him— Shawn I mean—from letting loose his vengeance upon you. No, nor upon Rathfillan House and all that it contains, you among the number."

"I will do nothing," replied Barney, firmly, "to bring Shawn or any of you into danger; but as sure as I have a Christian soul to be saved, and life in my

body, I will, as I said, put Mr. Harry Woodward upon his guard against him. So now, if you think it proper to let me be present at your meeting, knowing what you know, I will go, but not otherwise."

"I feel, Barney," said his brother, "that my mind is much hardened of late by the society I keep. I remember when I thought murder as horrible a thing as you do, but now it is not so. The planning and the plotting of it is considered only as a good joke among us."

"But why don't you lave them, then?" said Barney. "The pious principles of our father and mother were never such as they practise and preach among you. Why don't you lave them, I say?"

"Don't you know," replied Michael, "that *that* step would be my death-warrant? Once we join them we must remain with them, let what may happen. No man laving them, unless he gets clear of the country altogether, may expect more than a week's lease of life; in general not so much. They look upon him as a man that has been a spy among them, and who has left them to make his peace, and gain a fortune from government for betraying them; and you know how often it has happened."

"It is too true, Michael," replied his brother, "for unfortunately it so happens that, whether for good or evil, Irishmen can never be got to stand by each other. Ay, it is true — too true. In the meantime call on me to-morrow with liberty from Shawn to attend your meeting, and we will both go there together."

"Very well," replied his brother, "I will do so."

The next night was one of tolerably clear moon

light; and about the hour of twelve or one o'clock some twenty or twenty-five outlaws were assembled immediately adjoining the spot where Charles Lindsay was so severely and dangerously wounded. The appearance of those men was singular and striking. Their garbs, we need scarcely inform our readers, were different from those of the present day. Many — nay, most, if not all of them, were bitter enemies to the law, which rendered it penal for them to wear their glibs, and in consequence most of those present had them in full perfection around their heads, over which was worn the barrad or Irish cap, which, however, was then beginning to fall into desuetude. There was scarcely a man of them on whose countenance was not stamped the expression of care, inward suffering, and, as it would seem, the recollection of some grief or sorrow which had befallen themselves or their families. There was something, consequently, determined and utterly reckless in their faces, which denoted them to be men who had set at defiance both the world and its laws. They all wore the *truis*, the brogue, and beneath the cloaks which covered them were concealed the celebrated Irish skean or middogue, so that at the first glance they presented the appearance of men who were in a peaceful garb and unarmed. The persons of some of them were powerful and admirably symmetrical, as could be guessed from their well-defined outlines. They arranged themselves in a kind of circle around *Shawn-na-Middogue*, who stood in the centre as their chief and leader. A spectator, however, could not avoid observing that, owing to the peculiarity of their costume, which, in conse-

quence of their exclusion from society, not to mention the poverty and hardship which they were obliged to suffer, their appearance as a body was wild and almost savage. In their countenances was blended a twofold expression, composed of ferocity and despair. They felt themselves excommunicated, whether justly or not, from the world and its institutions, and knew too well that society, and the laws by which it is regulated and protected, were hunting them like beasts of prey for their destruction. Perhaps they deserved it, and this consideration may still more strongly account for their fierce and relentless-looking aspect. There is, in the meantime, no doubt that, however wild, ferocious, and savage they may have appeared, the strong and terrible hand of injustice and oppression had much, too much, to do with the crimes which they had committed, and which drove them out of the pale of civilized life. Altogether the spectacle of their appearence there on that night was a melancholy, as well as a fearful one, and ought to teach statesmen that it is not by oppressive laws that the heart of man can be improved, but that, on the contrary, when those who project and enact them come to reap the harvest of their policy, they uniformly find it one of violence and crime. So it has been since the world began, and so it will be so long as it lasts, unless a more genial and humane principle of legislation shall become the general system of managing, and, consequently, of improving society.

"Now, my friends," said *Shaun-na-Middogue*, "you all know why we are here. Unfortunate Granua Davoren has disappeared, and I have brought you to-

gether that we may set about the task of recovering her, whether she is living or dead. Even her heart-broken parents would feel it a consolation to have her corpse in order that they might give it Christian burial. It will be a shame and a disgrace to us if she is not found, as I said, living or dead. Will you all promise to rest neither night nor day till she is found? In that case swear it on your skeans."

In a moment every skean was out, and, with one voice, they said, "By the contents of this blessed iron, that has been sharpened for the hearts of our oppressors, we will never rest, either by night or by day, till we find her, living or dead"—every man then crossed himself and kissed his skean—"and, what is more," they added, "we will take vengeance upon the villain that ruined her."

"Hould," said Shawn; "do you know who he is?"

"By all accounts," they replied, "the man that you struck."

"No!" exclaimed Shawn, "I struck the wrong man; and poor Granua was right when she screamed out that I had murdered the innocent. But now," he added, "why am *I* here among you? I will tell you, although I suppose the most of you know it already: it was good and generous Mr. Lindsay's she-devil of a wife that did it; and it was her he-devil of a son, Harry Woodward, that ruined Granua Davoren. My mother happened to say that she was a heartless and tyrannical woman, that she had the Evil Eye, and that a devil, under the name of *Shan-dhinne-dhuv*, belonged to her family, and put her up to every kind of wickedness. This, which was only the common report,

reached her ears, and the consequence was that because we were behind in the rent only a single gale, she sent in her bailiffs without the knowledge of her husband, who was from home at the time, and left neither a bed under us, nor a roof over us. At all events, it is well for her that she *is* a woman; but she has a son born in her own image, so far, at least, as a bad heart is concerned; that son is the destroyer of Granua Davoren; but not a man of you must raise his hand to him: he must be left to my vengeance. Caterine Collins has told me much more about him, but it is useless to mention it. The Evil Spirit I spoke of, the *Shan-dhinne-dhuv*, and he have been often seen together; but no matter for that; he'll find the same spirit badly able to protect him; so, as I said before, he must be left to my vengeance."

"You mentioned Caterine Collins?" said one of them. "Caterine has friends here, Shawn. What is your opinion of her?"

"Yes," observed another, "she has friends here; but, then, she has enemies, too; men who have a good right to hate the ground she walks on."

"Whatever my opinion of Caterine Collins may be," said Shawn, "I will keep it to myself; I only say, that the man who injures her is no friend of mine. Isn't she a woman? And, surely, we are not to quarrel with, or injure a defenceless woman."

By this piece of policy Shawn gained considerable advantage. His purpose was to preserve such an ascendency over that cunning and treacherous woman as might enable him to make her useful in working out his own designs, his object being, not only on that

account, but for the sake of his own personal safety, to stand well with both her friends and her enemies.

Other matters were discussed, and plans of vengeance proposed and assented to, the details of which would afford our readers but slight gratification. After their projects had been arranged, this wild and savage, but melancholy group, dispersed, and so intimately were they acquainted with the intricacies of cover and retreat which then characterized the surface of the country, that in a few minutes they seemed rather to have vanished like spectres than to have disappeared like living men. Shawn, however, remained behind in order to hold some private conversation with Barney Casey.

"Barney," said he, "I wish to speak to you about that villain Woodward."

"I don't at all doubt," replied this honest and manly peasant, "that he is a villain; but at the same time, Shawn, you must remember that I am not a tory, and that I will neither aid nor assist you in your designs of murdher upon him. I received betther principles from my father and the mother who bore me; and indeed I think that the same thing may be said of yourself, Shawn. Still and all, there is no doubt but that, unlike that self-willed brother of mine, you had heavy provocation to join the life you did."

"Well, Barney," replied Shawn, in a melancholy tone of voice, "if the same oppressions were to come on us again, I think I would take another coorse. My die, however, is cast, and I must abide by it. What I wanted to say to you, however, is this:—you are livin' in the same house with Woodward; keep your

eye on him—watch him well and closely; he is plot ting evil for somebody."

"Why?" said Barney; "how do you know that?"

"I have it," replied Shawn, "from good authority. He has paid three or four midnight visits to Sol, the herb docthor, and you know that a greater old scoundrel than he is doesn't breathe the breath of life. It has been long suspected that he is a poisoner, and they say that in spite of the poverty he takes on him, he is rich and full of money. It can be for no good, then, that Woodward consults him at such unseasonable hours."

"Ay; but who the devil could he think of poison ing?" said Barney. "I see nobody he could wish to poison."

"Maybe, for all that, the deed is done," replied Shawn. "Where, for instance, is unfortunate *Granua?* Who can tell that he hasn't dosed *her?*"

"I believe him villain enough to do it," returned the other; "but still I don't think he did. He was at home to my own knowledge the night she disappeared, and could know nothing of what became of her. I think that's a sure case."

"Well," said Shawn, "it may be so; but in the manetime his stolen visits to the ould herb docthor are not for nothing. I end, then, as I began—keep your eye on him; watch him closely—and now, good night."

These hints were not thrown away upon Barney, who was naturally of an observant turn; and accordingly he kept a stricter eye than ever upon the motions of Harry Woodward. This accomplished gentleman, like

every villain of his class, was crafty and secret in everything he did and said; that is to say, his object was always to lead those with whom he held intercourse, to draw the wrong inference from his words and actions. Even his mother, as the reader will learn, was not in his full confidence. Such men, however, are so completely absorbed in the management of their own plans, that the latent principle or motive occasionally becomes apparent, without any consciousness of its exhibition on their part. Barney soon had an opportunity of suspecting this. His brother Charles, after what appeared to be a satisfactory convalescence, began to relapse, and a fresh fever to set in. The first person to communicate the melancholy intelligence to Woodward happened to be Barney himself, who, on meeting him early in the morning, said, —

"I am sorry, Mr. Woodward, to tell you that Masther Charles is a great deal worse; he spent a bad night, and it seems has got very feverish."

A gleam of satisfaction—short and transient, but which, however, was too significant to be misunderstood by such a sagacious observer as Barney—flashed across his countenance—but only for a moment. He recomposed his features, and assuming a look expressive of the deepest sorrow, said,—

"Good heavens, Casey, do you tell me that my poor brother is worse, and we all in such excellent spirits at what we considered his certain but gradual recovery?"

"He is much worse, sir; and the masther this morning has strong doubts of his recovery. He's in great affliction about him, and so are they all. His loss

would be felt in the neighborhood, for, indeed, it's he that was well beloved by all who knew him."

"He certainly was a most amiable and affectionate young fellow," said Woodward, "and, for my part, if he goes from us through the means of that murdering blow, I shall hunt *Shawn-na-Middogue* to the death."

"Will you take a friend's advice?" replied Barney: "we all of us wish, of coorse, to die a Christian death upon our beds, that we may think of the sins we have committed, and ask the pardon of our Saviour and inthersessor for them. I say, then, if you wish to die such a death, and to have time to repent of your sins, avoid coming across *Shawn-na-Middogue* above all men in the world. I tell you this as a friend, and now you're warned."

Woodward paused, and his face became black with a spirit of vengeance.

"How does it happen, Casey," he asked, "that you are able to give me such a warning? You must have some particular information on the subject."

"The only information I have on the subject is this —that you are set down among most people as the man who destroyed Grace Davoren, and not your brother; Shawn believes this, and on that account, I say, it will be well for you to avoid him. He believes, too, that you have her concealed somewhere—although I don't think so; but if you have, Mr. Woodward, it would be an act of great kindness—an act becomin' both a gentleman and a Christian—to restore the unfortunate girl to her parents."

"I know no more about her than you do, Casey. How could *I*? Perhaps my poor brother, when he is

capable of it, may be able to afford us some information on the subject. As it is I know nothing of it, but I shall leave nothing undone to recover her if she be alive, or if the thing can be accomplished. In the meantime all I can think of is the relapse of my poor brother. Until he gets better I shall not be able to fix my mind upon anything else. What is Grace Davoren or *Shawn-na-Middogue*—the accursed scoundrel—to me, so long as my dear Charles is in a state of danger?"

"Now," said he, when they parted, "now to work earth and hell to secure *Shawn-na-Middogue*. He has got my secret concerning the girl Davoren, and I feel that while he is at large I cannot be safe. There is a reward for his head, whether alive or dead, but that I scorn. In the meantime, I shall not lose an hour in getting together a band who will scour the country along with myself, until we secure him. After that I shall be at perfect liberty to work out my plans without either fear of, or danger from, this murdering ruffian."

CHAPTER XVIII.

THE TOIR, OR TORY HUNT.

HARRY WOODWARD now began to apprehend that, as the reader sees, either his star or that of *Shawn-na-Middogue* must be in the ascendant. He accordingly set to work with all his skill and craft to secure his person and offer him up as a victim to the outraged laws of his country, and to a government that had set a price upon his head, as the leader of the outlaws; or, what came nearer to his wish, either to shoot him down with his own hand, or to have him shot by those who were on the alert for such persons. The first individual to whom he applied upon the subject was his benevolent step-father, who he knew was a magistrate, and whose duty was to have the wretched class of whom we write arrested or shot as best they might.

"Sir," said he, "I think after what has befallen my dear brother Charles that this murdering villain, *Shawn-na-Middogue*, who is at the head of the tories and outlaws, ought to be shot, or taken up and handed over to government."

"Why," asked Mr. Lindsay, "what has happened in connection with *Shawn-na-Middogue* and your brother?"

"Why, that it was from his hand he received the wound that may be his death. That, I think, is sufficient to make you exert yourself; and indeed it is, in my opinion, both a shame and a scandal that the

subject has not been taken up with more energy by the magistracy of the country."

"But who can tell," replied Lindsay, "whether it was *Shawn-na-Middogue* that stabbed Charles? Charles himself does not know the individual who stabbed him."

"The language of the girl, I think," replied Woodward, "might indicate it. He was once her lover——"

"But she named nobody," replied the other; "and as for lovers, she had enough If them. of *Shawn-na-Middogue* is an outlaw *now*, I know who made him so. I remember when there wasn't a better conducted boy on your mother's property. He was a credit to his family and the neighborhood; but they were turned out in my absence by your unfeeling mother there, Harry; and the fine young fellow had nothing else for it but the life of an outlaw. Confound me if I can much blame him."

"Thank you, Lindsay," replied his wife; "as kind as ever to the woman who brought you that property. But you forget what the young scoundrel's mother said of me — do you? that I had the Evil Eye, and that there was a familiar or devil connected with me and my family?"

"Egad! and I'm much of her opinion," replied her husband; "and if she said it, I give you my honor it is only what every one who knows you says, and what I, who know you best, say as well as they. Begone, madam — leave the room; it was your damned oppression made the boy a tory. Begone, I say — I will bear with your insolence no longer."

He stood up as he spoke — his eye flashed, and the stamp of his foot made the floor shake. Mrs. Lindsay

knew her husband well, and without a single syllable in reply she arose and left the room.

"Harry," proceeded his stepfather, "I shall take no proceedings against that unfortunate young man — tory though he be; I would resign my magistracy sooner. Do not, therefore, count on me."

"Well, sir," said he, with a calm but black expression of countenance, "I will not enter into domestic quarrels; but I am my mother's son."

"You are," replied Lindsay, looking closely at him— "and I regret it. I do not like the expression of your face — it is bad; worse I have seldom seen."

"Be that expression what it may, sir," replied Woodward, "by the heavens above me I shall rest neither night nor day until I put an end to *Shawn-na-Middogue*."

"In the meantime you shall have no assistance from me, Harry; and it ill becomes your mother's son — the woman whose cruelty to the family made him what he is — to attempt to hunt him down. On the contrary, I tell you as a friend to let him pass; the young man is desperate, and his vengeance, or that of his followers, may come on you when you least expect it. It is not his death that will secure you. If he dies through your means, he will leave those behind him who will afford you but short space to settle your last account."

"Be the consequences what they may," replied Woodward, "either he or I shall fall."

He left the room after expressing this determination, and his stepfather said, —

"I'm afraid, Maria, we don't properly understand

Master Harry. I am much troubled by what has occurred just now. I fear he is a hypocrite in morals, and without a single atom of honorable principle. Did you observe the expression of his face? Curse me if I think the devil himself has so bad a one. Besides, I have heard something about him that I don't like — something which I am not going to mention to you; but I say that in future we must beware of him."

"I was sorry, papa, to see the expression of his face," replied Maria; "it was fearful; and above all things the expression of his eye. It made me feel weak whenever he turned it on me."

"Egad, and it had something of the same effect on myself," replied her father. "There *is* some damned expression in it that takes away one's strength. Well, as I said, we must beware of him."

Woodward's next step was to pay a visit to Lord Cockletown, who, as he had gained his title in consequence of his success in tory-hunting, and capturing the most troublesome and distinguished outlaws of that day, was, he thought, the best and most experienced person to whom he could apply for information as to the most successful means of accomplishing his object. He accordingly waited on his lordship, to whom he thought, very naturally, that this exploit would recommend him. His lordship was in the garden, where Woodward found him in hobnailed shoes, digging himself into what he called his daily perspirations.

"Don't be surprised, Mr. Woodward," said he, "at my employment; I am taking my every-day sweat, because I feel that I could not drink as I do and get

on without it. Well, what do you want with me? Is it anything about Tom? Egad, Tom says she rather likes you than otherwise; and if you can satisfy me as to property settlements, and all that, I won't stand in your way; but, in the meantime, what do you want with me now? If it's Tom's affair, the state of your property comes first."

"No, my lord, I shall leave all dealings of business between you and my mother. This is a different affair, and one on which I wish to have your lordship's advice and direction."

"Ay, but what is it? Confound it, come to the point."

"It is a tory-hunt, my lord."

"Who is the tory, or who are the tories? Come, I'm at home here. What's your plan?"

"Why, simple pursuit. We have the *posse comitatus*."

"The *posse comitatus!* — the posse devil; what do the tories care about the *posse comitatus?* Have you bloodhounds?"

"No, my lord, but I think we can procure them."

"Because," proceeded his lordship, "to go hunt a tory without bloodhounds is like looking for your grandmother's needle in a bottle of straw."

"I am thankful to your lordship for that hint," replied Harry Woodward; "but the truth is, I have been almost since my infancy out of the country, and am, consequently, very ignorant of its usages."

"What particular tory are you going to hunt?"

"A fellow named *Shawn-na-Middogue*."

"Ah! *Shawn-na-Middogue*, your mother's victim?

Don't hunt *him*. If you're wise you'll keep your distance from that young fellow. I tell you, Mr. Woodward, there will be more danger to yourself in the hunt than there will be to him. It's a well-known fact that it was your mother's severity to his family that made a tory of him; and, as I said before, I would strongly recommend you to avoid him. How many bloodhounds have you got?"

"Why, I think we can muster half a dozen."

"Ay, but do you know how to hunt them?"

"Not exactly; but I suppose we may depend upon the instinct of the dogs."

"No, sir, you may not, unless to a very limited extent. Those tories always, when pursued by bloodhounds, go down the wind whenever it is possible, and, consequently, leave very little trail behind them. Your object will be, of course, to hunt them *against* the wind; they will consequently have little chance of escape, unless, as they are often in the habit of doing, they administer a sop."

"What is a sop, my lord?"

"A piece of raw beef or mutton, kept for twenty-four hours under the armpit until it becomes saturated with the moisture of the body; after this, administer it to the dog, and instead of attacking he will follow you over the world. The other sop resorted to by these fellows is the *middogue*, or skean, and, as they contrive to manage its application, it is the surer of the two. Should you like to see Tom?"

"Unquestionably, my lord. I intended before going to have requested the honor of a short interview."

"Ay, of course, to make love. Well, I tell you that

Tom, like her uncle, has her wits about her. Go up, then, you will find her in the withdrawing-room; and listen—I desire that you will tell her of your tory-hunting project, and ask her opinion upon it. Now, don't forget that, because I will make inquiries about it."

Woodward certainly found her in what was then termed the withdrawing-room. She was in the act of embroidering, and received him with much courtesy and kindness.

"I hope your mother and family are all well, Mr. Woodward," she said; "as for your sister Maria she is quite a stay-at-home. Does she ever visit any one at all?"

"Very rarely, indeed, Miss Riddle; but I think she will soon do herself the pleasure of calling upon you."

"I shall feel much obliged, Mr. Woodward. From what I have heard, and the little I have seen of her, a most amiable girl. You have had a chat with my kind-hearted, but eccentric uncle?"

"I have; and he imposed it on me as a condition that I should mention to you an enterprise on which I am bent."

"An enterprise! Pray, what is it?"

"Why, a tory-hunt; I am going to hunt down *Shawn-na-Middogue*, as he is called, and I think it will be rendering the country a service to get rid of him."

Miss Riddle's face got pale as ashes; and she looked earnestly and solemnly into Woodward's face.

"Mr. Woodward," said she, "would you oblige me in one simple request? Do not hunt down *Shawn-na-Middogue:* my uncle and I owe him our lives."

"How is that, Miss Riddle?"

"Do you not know that my uncle was a tory hunter?"

"I have certainly heard so," replied Woodward; "and I am, besides, aware of it from the admirable instructions which he gave me concerning the best method of hunting them down."

"Yes, but did he encourage you in your determination of hunting down *Shawn-na-Middogue?*"

"No, certainly; but, on the contrary, advised me to pass him by—to have nothing to do with him."

"Did he state his reasons for giving you such advice?"

"He mentioned something with reference to certain legal proceedings taken by my mother against the family of *Shawn-na-Middogue.* But I presume my mother had her own rights to vindicate, and beyond that I know nothing of it. He nearly stabbed my brother to death, and I will leave no earthly means unattempted to shoot the villain down, or otherwise secure him."

"Well, you are aware that my uncle was the most successful and celebrated tory-hunter of his day, and rendered important services to the government in that capacity—services which have been liberally rewarded."

"I am aware of it, Miss Riddle."

"But you are *not* aware, as I am, that this same *Shawn-na-Middogue* saved my uncle's life and mine on the night before last?"

"How could I, Miss Riddle?"

"It is a fact, though, and I beg you to mark it; and

I trust that if you respect my uncle and myself, you will not engage in this cruel and inhuman expedition."

"But your uncle mentioned nothing of this to me, Miss Riddle."

"He does not know it yet. I have been all yesterday thinking over the circumstance, with a view of getting his lordship to interfere with the government for this unfortunate youth; but I felt myself placed in circumstances of great difficulty and delicacy with respect to your family and ours. I hope you understand me, Mr. Woodward. I allude to the circumstances which forced him to become an outlaw and a tory, and it struck me that my uncle could not urge any application in his favor without adverting to them."

"O, Miss Riddle, if you feel an interest in his favor, he shall experience no molestation from me."

"The only interest which I feel in him is that of humanity and common gratitude, Mr. Woodward; but, indeed, I should rather say that the gratitude should *not* be common to a man who saved my uncle's life and mine."

"And pray may I ask how that came about? At all events he has made me his friend forever."

"My uncle and I were returning home from dinner, —we had dined at Squire Dawson's,—and on coming to a lonely part of the road we found our carriage surrounded by a party of the outlaws, who shouted out, 'This is the old tory-hunter, who got his wealth and title by persecuting us, and now we will pay him home for all.' 'Ay,' observed another, 'and his niece is with him, and we will have her off to the moun-

tains.' The carriage was immediately surrounded, and I know not to what an extent their violence and revenge might have proceeded, when Shawn came bounding among them with the air of a man who possessed authority over them.

"'Stop,' said he; 'on this occasion they must go free, and on every occasion. Lord Cockletown, let him be what he may before, is of late a good landlord, and a friend to the people. His niece, too, is——' He then complimented me upon some trifling acts of kindness I had paid to his family when—hem—ahem —in fact, when they stood much in need of it."

This was a delicate evasion of any allusion to the cruel conduct of his mother towards the outlaw's family.

"When," she went on, "he had succeeded in restraining the meditated violence of the tories, he approached me—for they had already dragged me out, and indeed it was my screaming that brought him with such haste to the spot. 'Now, Miss Riddle,' said he, in a low whisper which my uncle could not hear, 'one good act deserves another ; you were kind to my family when they stood sorely in need of it. You and your uncle are safe, and, what is more, will be safe: I will take care of that; but forget *Shawn-na-Middogue*, the outlaw and tory, or if ever you mention his name, let it be in a spirit of mercy and forgiveness.' Mr. Woodward, you will not hunt down this generous young man?"

"I would as soon hunt down my father, Miss Riddle, if he were alive. I trust you don't imagine that I can be insensible to such noble conduct."

"I do not think you are, Mr. Woodward; and I hope you will allow the unfortunate youth to remain unmolested until my uncle, to whom I shall mention the circumstances this day, may strive to have him restored to society."

We need scarcely assure our readers that Woodward pledged himself in accordance with her wishes, after which he went home and prepared such a mask for his face, and such a disguise of dress for his person, as, when assumed, rendered it impossible for any one to recognize him. Such was the spirit in which he kept his promise to Miss Riddle, and such the honor of every word that proceeded from his hypocritical lips.

In the meantime the preparations for the chase were made with the most extraordinary energy and caution. Woodward had other persons engaged in it, on whom he had now made up his mind to devolve the consequences of the whole proceedings. The sheriff and the *posse comitatus*, together with assistance from other quarters, had all been engaged; and as some vague intelligence of *Shawn-na-Middogue's* retreat had been obtained, Woodward proceeded in complete disguise before daybreak with a party, not one of whom was able to recognize him, well armed, to have what was, in those days, called a tory-hunt.

The next morning was dark and gloomy. Gray, heavy mists lay upon the mountain-tops, from which, as the light of the rising sun fell upon them, they retreated in broken masses to the valleys and lower grounds beneath them. A cold, chilly aspect lay upon the surface of the earth, and the white mists that had descended from the mountain-tops, or were drawn up

from the ground by the influence of the sun, were, although more condensed, beginning to get a warmer look.

Notwithstanding the secrecy with which this enterprise was projected it had taken wind, and many of those who had suffered by the depredations of the tories were found joining the band of pursuers, and many others who were friendly to them, or who had relations among them, also made their appearance, but contrived to keep somewhat aloof from the main body, though not at such a distance as might seem to render them suspected; their object being to afford whatever assistance they could, with safety to themselves and without incurring any suspicion of affinity to the unfortunate tories.

The country was of intricate passage and full of thick woods. At this distance of time, now that it is cleared and cultivated, our readers could form no conception of its appearance then. In the fastnesses and close brakes of those woods lay the hiding-places and retreats of the tories — " the wood kernes " of Spenser's day. A tory-hunt at that time, or at any time, was a pastime of no common danger. Those ferocious and determined banditti had little to render life desirable. They consequently set but a slight value upon it. The result was that the pursuits after them by foreign soldiers, and other persons but slightly acquainted with the country, generally ended in disaster and death to several of the pursuers.

On the morning in question the tory-hunters literally beat the woods as if they had been in the pursuit of game, but for a considerable time with little effect. Not the appearance of a single tory was anywhere

visible; but, notwithstanding this, it so happened that some one of their enemies occasionally dropped, either dead or wounded, by a shot from the intricacies and covers of the woods, which, upon being searched and examined, afforded no trace whatsoever of those who did the mischief. This was harassing and provocative of vengeance to the military and such wretched police as existed in that day. No search could discover a single trace of a tory, and many of those in the pursuit were obliged to withdraw from it — not unreluctantly, indeed — in order to bear back the dead and wounded to the town of Rathfillan.

As they were entering an open space that lay between two wooded enclosures, a white hare started across their path, to the utter consternation of those who were in pursuit. Woodward, now disguised and in his mask, had been for a considerable time looking behind him, but this circumstance did not escape his notice, and he felt, to say the least of it, startled at her second appearance. It reminded him, however, of the precautions which he had taken; and he looked back from time to time, as we have said, in expectation of something appertaining to the pursuit. At length he exclaimed, —

"Where are the party with the bloodhounds? Why have they not joined us and come up with us?"

"They have started a wolf," replied one of them, "and the dogs are after him; and some of them have gone back upon the trail of the wounded men."

"Return for them," said he; "without their assistance we can never find the trail of these accursed tories; but, above all, of *Shawn-na-Middogue.*"

In due time the dogs were brought up, but the trails were so various that they separated mostly into single hunts, and went at such a rapid speed that they were lost in the woods.

At length two of them, who came up first, gave tongue, and the body of pursuers concentrated themselves on the newly-discovered trail, keeping as close to the dogs as they could. Those two had quartered the woods and returned to the party again when they fell upon the slot of some unfortunate victim who had recently escaped from the place. The pursuit now became energetic and full of interest, if we could forget the melancholy and murderous fact that the game pursued were human victims, who had nothing more nor less to expect from their pursuers than the savage wolves which then infested the forests—a price having been laid upon the heads of each.

After some time the party arrived at the outskirts of the wood, and an individual was seen bounding along in the direction of the mountains — the two dogs in full pursuit of him. The noise, the animation, and the tumult of the pursuit were now astounding, and rang long and loud over the surface of the excited and awakened neighborhood, whilst the wild echoes of their inhuman enjoyment were giving back their terrible responses from the hills and valleys around them. The shouting, the urging on of the dogs by ferocious cries of encouragement, were loud, incessant, and full of a spirit which, at this day, it is terrible to reflect upon. The whole country was alive; and the loud, vociferous agitation which disturbed it, resembled the influence of one of those storms which lash the quiet

sea into madness. Fresh crowds joined them, as we have said, and the tumult still became louder and stronger. In the meantime, *Shawn-na-Middogue's* case — it was he — became hopeless — for it was the speed of the fleetest runner that ever lived to that of two powerful bloodhounds, animated, as they were, by their ferocious instincts. Indeed, the interest of the chase was heightened by the manner and conduct of the dogs, which, when they came upon the trail of the individual, in question, yelped aloud with an ecstatic delight that gave fresh courage to the vociferous band of pursuers.

"Who can that man be?" asked one of them; "he seems to have wings to his feet."

"By the sacred light of day," exclaimed another, "it is no other than the famous *Shawn-na-Middogue* himself. I know him well; and even if I did not, who could mistake him by his speed of foot?"

"Is that he?" said the mask; "then fifty pounds in addition to the government reward to the man who will shoot him down, or secure him, living or dead: only let him be taken."

Just then four or five persons, friends of course to the unfortunate outlaw, came in before the dogs across the trail, in consequence of which the animals became puzzled, and lost considerable time in regaining it, whilst Shawn, in the meantime, was fast making his way to the mountains.

The reward, however, offered by the man in the black mask—for it was a black one—accelerated the speed of the pursuers, between whom a competition of terrible energy and action arose as to which of them should secure the public reward and the premium that

were offered for his blood. Shawn, however, had been evidently exhausted, and sat down considerably in advance of them, on the mountain side, to take breath, in order to better the chance of effecting his escape; but whilst seated, panting after his race, the dogs gained rapidly upon him. Having put his hand over his eyes, and looked keenly down—for he had the sight of an eagle—the approach of the dogs did not seem at all to alarm him.

"Ah, thank God, they will have him soon," said the mask, "and it is a pity that we cannot give them the reward. Who owns those noble dogs?"

"You will see that very soon, sir," replied a man beside him; "you will see it very soon—you may see it now."

As he uttered the words the dogs sprang upon Shawn, wagged their tails as if in a state of most ecstatic delight, and began to caress him and lick his face.

"Finn, my brave Finn!" he exclaimed, patting him affectionately, "and is this you? and Oonah, my darling Oonah, did the villains think that my best friends would pursue *me* for *my blood?* Come now," said he, "follow me, and we will lead them a chase."

During his brief rest, however, four of the most active of his pursuers, who knew what is called the *lie* of the country, succeeded, by passing through the skirt of the wood in a direction where it was impossible to observe them, in coming up behind the spot where he had sat, and consequently, when he and his dogs, or those which had been once his, ascended its flat summit, the four men pounced upon him. Four against one would, in ordinary cases, be fearful odds; but Shawn

knew that he had two stanch and faithful friends to support him. Quick as lightning his middogue was into one of their hearts, and almost as quickly were two more of them seized by the throats and dragged down by the powerful animals that defended him. The fourth man was as rapidly despatched by a single blow, whilst the dogs were literally tearing out the throats of their victims. In the course of about ten minutes, what between Shawn's middogue and the terrible fangs and strength of those dreadful animals, the four men lay there four corpses. Shawn's danger, however, notwithstanding his success, was only increasing. His pursuers had now gained upon him, and when he looked around he found himself hemmed in, or nearly so. Speed of foot was everything; but, what was worst of all, with reference to his ultimate escape, four other dogs were making their way up the mountains—dogs to which he was a stranger, and he knew right well that they would hunt him with all the deadly instincts of blood. They were, however, far in the distance, and he felt little apprehension from *them.* Be this as it may, he bounded off accompanied by his faithful friends, and not less than twenty shots were fired after him, none of which touched him. The number of his pursuers, dogs included, almost made his heart sink; and would have done so, but that he was probably desperate and reckless of life. He saw himself almost encompassed; he heard the bullets whistling about him, and perceived at a glance that the chances of his escape were a thousand to one against him. With a rapid sweep of his eye he marked the locality. It also was all against him. There was a

shoreless lake, abrupt and deep to the very edge, except a slip at the opposite side, lying at his feet. It was oblong, but at each end of it there was nothing like a pass for at least two or three miles. If he could swim across this he knew that he was safe, and that he could do so he felt certain, provided he escaped the bullets and the dogs of the pursuers. At all events he dashed down and plunged in, accompanied by his faithful attendants. Shot after shot was sent after him; and so closely did some of them reach him, that he was obliged to dive and swim under water from time to time, in order to save himself from their aim. The strange bloodhounds, however, which had entered the lake, were gaining rapidly on him, and on looking back he saw them within a dozen yards of him. He was now, however, beyond the reach of their bullets, unless it might be a longer shot than ordinary, but the four dogs were upon him, and in the extremity of despair he shouted out, —

"Finn and Oonagh, won't you save me?"

Shame upon the friendship and attachment of man! In a moment two of the most powerful of the strange dogs were in something that resembled a death struggle with his brave and gallant defenders. The other two, however, were upon himself; but by a stab of his middogue he despatched one of them, and the other he pressed under water until he was drowned.

In the meantime, whilst the four other dogs were fighting furiously in the water, Shawn, having felt exhausted, was obliged to lie on his back and float, in order to regain his strength.

A little before this contest commenced, the black

mask and a number of the pursuing party were standing on the edge of the lake looking on, conscious of the impossibility of their interference.

"Is there no stout man and good swimmer present," exclaimed the mask, "who will earn the fifty pounds I have offered for the capture of that man?"

"Here am I," said a powerful young fellow, the best swimmer, with the exception of *Shawn-na-Middogue*, in the province. "I am like a duck in the water; but, upon my sowl, so is he. If I take him, you will give me the fifty pounds?"

"Unquestionably; but you know you will have the government reward besides."

"Well, then, here goes. I cannot bring my carbine with me; but even so — we will have a tug for it with my skean."

He threw off his coat and barrad, and immediately plunged in and swam with astonishing rapidity towards the spot where Shawn and the dogs — the latter still engaged in their ferocious contest — were in the lake. Shawn now had regained considerable strength, and was about to despatch the enemies of his brave defenders, when, on looking back to the spot on the margin of the lake where his pursuers stood, he saw the powerful young swimmer within a few yards of him. It was well for him that he had regained his strength, and such was his natural courage that he felt rather gratified at the appearance of only a single individual.

"*Shawn-na-Middogue*," said the young fellow, "I come to make you a prisoner. Will you fight me fairly in the water?"

"I am a hunted outlaw — a tory," replied Shawn, "and will fight you the best way I can. If we were on firm earth I would fight you on your own terms. If there is to be a fight between us, remember that you are fighting for the government reward, and I for my life."

"Will you fight me, said the man, "without using your middogue?"

"I saw you take a skean from between your teeth as I turned round," replied Shawn, "and I know now that you are a villain and a treacherous ruffian, who would take a cowardly advantage of me if you could."

The fellow made a plunge at Shawn, who was somewhat taken by surprise. They met and grappled in the water, and the contest between them was, probably, one of the fiercest and most original that ever occurred between man and man. It was distinctly visible to the spectators on the shore, and the interest which it excited in them can scarcely be described. A terrible grapple ensued, but as neither of them wished to die by drowning, or, in fact, to die under such peculiar circumstances at all, there was a degree of caution in the contest which required great skill and power on both sides. Notwithstanding this caution, however, still, when we consider the unsubstantial element on which the battle between them raged — for rage it did — there were frightful alternatives of plunging and sinking between them. Shawn's opponent was the stronger of the two, but Shawn possessed in activity what the other possessed in strength. The waters of the lake were agitated by their struggles and foamed white about

them, whilst, at the same time, the four bloodhounds tearing each other beside them added to the agitation. Shawn and his opponent clasped each other and frequently disappeared for a very brief space, but the necessity to breathe and rise to the air forced them to relax their grasps and seek the surface of the water; so was it with the dogs. At length, Shawn, feeling that his middogue had got entangled in his dress, which the water had closely contracted about it, rendering it difficult, distracted as he was by the contest, to extricate it, turned round and swam several strokes from his enemy, who, however, pursued him with the ferocity of one of the bloodhounds beside them. This *ruse* was to enable Shawn to disengage his middogue, which he did. In the meantime this expedient of Shawn's afforded his opponent time to bring out his skean, — two weapons which differed very little except in name. They once more approached one another, each with the armed hand up, — the left, — and a fiercer and more terrible contest was renewed. The instability of the element, however, on which they fought, prevented them from using their weapons with effect. At all events they played about each other, offering and warding off the blows, when Shawn exclaimed, — having grasped his opponent with his right arm, —

"I am tired of this; it must be now sink or swim between us. To die here is better than to die on the gallows."

As he spoke both sank, and for about half a minute became invisible. The spectators from the shore now gave them both over for lost; one of them only emerged with the fatal middogue in his hand, but his

opponent appeared not, and for the best reason in the world: he was on his way to the bottom of the lake. Shawn's exhaustion after such a struggle now rendered his situation hopeless. He was on the point of going down when he exclaimed:

"It is all in vain now; I am sinking, and me so near the only slip that is in the lake. Finn and Oonagh, save me; I am drowning."

The words were scarcely out of his lips when he felt the two faithful, powerful, and noble animals, one at each side of him—seeing as they did, his sinking state—seizing him by his dress, and dragging him forward to the slip we have mentioned. With great difficulty he got upon land, but, having done so, he sat down; and when his dogs, in the gambols of their joy at his safety, caressed him, he wept like an infant—this proscribed outlaw and tory. He was now safe, however, and his pursuers returned in a spirit of sullen and bitter disappointment, finding that it was useless to continue the hunt any longer.

CHAPTER XIX.

PLANS AND NEGOTIATIONS.

We have already said that Woodward was a man of personal courage, and without fear of anything either living or dead, yet, notwithstanding all this, he felt a terror of *Shawn-na-Middogue* which he could not overcome. The escape—the extraordinary escape of that celebrated young tory—depressed and vexed him to the heart. He was conscious, however, of his own villany and of his conduct to Grace Davoren, whom Shawn had loved, and, as Shakespeare says, "conscience makes cowards of us all." One thing, however, afforded him some consolation, which was that his disguise prevented him from being known as the principal person engaged in the attempt to hunt down the outlaw. He knew that after the solemn promise he had given Miss Riddle, any knowledge on her part of his participation in the pursuit of that generous but unfortunate young man would have so completely sunk him in her opinion, as an individual professing to be a man of honor, that she would have treated his proposals with contempt, and rejected him with disdain. At all events, his chief object now was to lose no time in prosecuting his suit with her. For this purpose he urged his mother to pay Lord Cockletown another visit, in order to make a formal proposal for the hand of his niece in his name, with a view of bringing the matter to an issue with as little delay as might be. His

brother, who had relapsed, was in a very precarious condition, but still slightly on the recovery, a circumstance which filled him with alarm. He only went out at night occasionally, but still he went out, and, as before, did not return until about twelve, but much more frequently one, two, and sometimes three o'clock. Nobody in the house could understand the mystery of these midnight excursions, and the servants of the family, who were well aware of them, began to look on him with a certain undefined terror as a man whose unaccountable movements were associated with something that was evil and supernatural. They felt occasionally that the power of his eye was dreadful; and as it began to be whispered about that it was by its evil influence he had brought Alice Goodwin to the very verge of the grave for the purpose of getting at the property, which was to revert to him in case she should die without issue, there was not one of them who, on meeting him, either in or about the house, would run the risk of looking him in the face. In fact, they experienced that kind of fear of him which a person might be supposed to feel in the case of a spirit; and this is not surprising when we consider the period in which they lived.

Be this as it may, his mother got up the old carriage once more and set out on her journey to Cockle Hall —her head filled with many an iniquitous design, and her heart with fraud and deceit. On reaching Cockle Hall she was ushered to the withdrawing-room, where she found his lordship in the self-same costume which we have already described. Miss Riddle was in her own room, so that she had the coast clear—which was precisely what she wanted.

"Well, Mrs. Lindsay, I'm glad to see you. How do you do, madam? Is your son with you?" he added, shaking hands with her.

"No, my lord."

"O! an ambassadress, then?"

"Something in that capacity, my lord."

"Then I must be on my sharps, for I am told you are a keen one. But tell me — do you sleep with one eye open, as I do?"

"Indeed, my lord," she replied, laughing, "I sleep as other people do, with both eyes shut."

"Well, then, what's your proposal? — and, mark me, I'm wide awake."

"By all accounts, my lord, you have seldom been otherwise. How could you have played your cards so well and so successfully if you had not?"

"Come, that's not bad — just what I expected, and I like to deal with clever people. Did you put yourself on the whetstone before you came here? I'll go bail you did."

"If I did not I would have little chance in dealing with your lordship," replied Mrs. Lindsay.

"Come, I like that, too; — well said, and nothing but the truth. In fact it will be diamond cut diamond between us — eh?"

"Precisely, my lord. You will find me as sharp as your lordship, for the life of you."

"Come, confound me, I like that best of all — a touch of my own candor; — we're kindred spirits, Mrs. Lindsay."

"I think so, my lord. We should have been man and wife."

"Egad, if we had I shouldn't have played second fiddle, as I'm told poor Lindsay does; however, no matter about that — even a good second is not so bad. But now about the negotiations — come, give a specimen of your talents. Let us come to the point."

"Well, then, I am here, my lord, to propose, in the name of my son Woodward, for the hand of Miss Riddle, your niece."

"I see; no regard for the property she is to have, eh?"

"Do you think me a fool, my lord? Do you imagine that any one of common sense would or should overlook such an element between parties who propose to marry? Whatever my son may do — who is deeply attached to Miss Riddle — I am sure I do not, nor will not, overlook it; you may rest assured of that, my lord."

Old Cockletown looked keenly at her, and their eyes met; but, after a long and steady gaze, the eyes of the old peer quailed, and he felt, when put to an encounter with hers, that to which was attributed such extraordinary influence. There sparkled in her steady black orb a venomous exultation, mingled with a spirit of strong and contemptuous derision, which made the eccentric old nobleman feel rather uncomfortable. *His* eye fell, and, considering his age, it was decidedly a keen one. He fidgeted upon the chair — he coughed, hemmed, then looked about the room, and at length exclaimed, rather in a soliloquy, —

"Second fiddle! egad, I'm afraid had we been man and wife I should never have got beyond it. Poor Lindsay! It's confoundedly odd, though."

"Well, Mrs. Lindsay — ahem — pray proceed, madam; let us come to the property. How does your son stand in that respect?"

"He will have twelve hundred a year, my lord."

"I told you before, Mrs. Lindsay, that I don't like the future tense—the present for me. What *has* he?"

"It can scarcely be called the future tense, my lord, which you seem to abhor so much. Nothing stands between him and it but a dying girl."

"How is that, madam?"

"Why, my lord, his Uncle Hamilton, my brother, had a daughter, an only child, who died of decline, as her mother before her did. This foolish child was inveigled into an unaccountable affection for the daughter of Mr. Goodwin— a deep, designing, artful girl—who contrived to gain a complete ascendency over both father and daughter. For months before my niece's death this cunning girl, prompted by her designing family, remained at her sick bed, tended her, nursed her, and would scarcely allow a single individual to approach her except herself. In short, she gained such an undue and iniquitous influence over both parent and child, that her diabolical object was accomplished."

"Diabolical! Well, I can see nothing diabolical in it, for so far. Affection and sympathy on the one hand, and gratitude on the other—that seems much more like the thing. But proceed, madam."

"Why, my poor brother, who became silly and enfeebled in intellect by the loss of his child, was prevailed on by Miss Goodwin and her family to adopt her as his daughter, and by a series of the most artful

and selfish manœuvres they succeeded in getting the poor imbecile and besotted old man to make a will in her favor; and the consequence was that he left her twelve hundred a year, both to her and her issue, should she marry and have any; but in case she should have no issue, then, after her death, it was to revert to my son Woodward, for whom it was originally intended by my brother. It was a most unprincipled and shameful transaction on the part of these Goodwins. Providence, however, would seem to have punished them for their iniquity, for Miss Goodwin is dying—at least, beyond all hope. The property, of course, will soon be in my son's possession, where it ought to have been ever since his uncle's death. Am I not right, then, in calculating on that property as his?"

"Why, the circumstances you speak of are recent; I remember them well enough. There was a lawsuit about the will?"

"There was, my lord."

"And the instrument was proved strictly legal and valid?"

"The suit was certainly determined against us."

"I'll tell you what, Mrs. Lindsay; I am certain that I myself would have acted precisely as your brother did. I know the Goodwins, too, and I know, besides, that they are incapable of reverting to either fraud or undue influence of any kind. All that you have told me, then, is, with great respect to you, nothing but mere rigmarole. I am sorry, however, to hear that the daughter, poor girl, is dying. I hope in God she will recover."

There is no earthly probability—nay, possibility

of it—which is a stronger word—I know, my lord, she will die, and that very soon."

"You know, madam! How the deuce can *you* know? It is all in the hands of God. I hope she will live to enjoy her property."

"My lord, I visited the girl in her illness, and life was barely in her; I have, besides, the opinion of the physician who attended her, and of another who was called in to consult upon her state, and both have informed me that her recovery is hopeless."

"And what opinion does your son, Woodward, entertain upon the subject?"

"One, my lord, in complete keeping with his generous character. He is as anxious for her recovery as your lordship."

"Well, I like that, at all events; it is a good point in him. Yes, I like that—but, in the meantime, here are you calculating upon a contingency that may never happen. The calculation is, I grant, not overburdened with delicacy of feeling; but still it may proceed from anxiety for the settlement and welfare of your son. Not an improbable thing on the part of a mother, I grant that."

"Well, then, my lord," asked Mrs. Lindsay, "what is to be done? Come to the point, as you very properly say yourself."

"In the first place bring me the written opinions of those two doctors. They ought to know her state of health best, and whether she is likely to recover or not. I know I am an old scoundrel in entering into a matrimonial negotiation upon a principle so inhuman as the poor lady's death; but still, if her demise is a certain

thing, I don't see why men of the world should not avail themselves of such a circumstance. Now, I wish to see poor Tom settled before I die; and, above all things, united to a gentleman. Your son Woodward, Mrs. Lindsay, is a gentleman, and what is more, I have reason to believe Tommy likes him. She speaks well of him, and there is a great deal in that; because I know that if she disliked him she would not conceal the fact. She has, occasionally, much of her old uncle's bluntness about her, and will not say one thing and think another; unless, indeed, when she has a design in it, and then she is inscrutable."

"My own opinion is this, my lord: let my son wait upon Miss Riddle—let him propose for her—and if she consents, why, the marriage settlements may be drawn up at once and the ceremony performed."

"Let me see," he replied. "That won't do. I will never marry off poor Tommy upon a speculation which may never after all be realized. No, no—I'm awake there; but I'll tell you what—produce me those letters from the physician or physicians who attended her; then, should Tom give her consent, the settlements may be drawn up, and they can lie unsigned until the girl dies—and then let them be married. Curse me, I'm an old scoundrel again; however, as to that the whole world is nothing but one great and universal scoundrel, and it is nothing but to see Tom the wife of a gentleman in feeling, manners, and bearing, that I consent even to this conditional arrangement."

"Well," replied the lady, "be it so; it is as much as either of us can do under the circumstances."

"Ay, and more than we ought to do. I never was

without a conscience; but of all the poor pitiful scoundrels of a conscience that ever existed, it was the greatest. But why should I blame it? It loved me too well; for, after some gentle rebukes when I was about to do a rascally act, it quietly withdrew all opposition and left me to my own will."

"Ah, we all know you too well, my lord, to take your own report of your own character. However, I am glad that matters have proceeded so far. I shall do what your lordship wishes as to the opinions of the medical men. The lawyers, with our assistance, will manage the settlements."

"Yes; but this arrangement must be kept a secret from Tom, because if she knew of it she would knock up the whole project."

"She shall not from me, my lord."

"Nor from me, I promise you that. But now for another topic. I am glad your son had nothing to do with the dreadful chase of that unfortunate *Shawn-na-Middogue;* he pledged his honor to Tom that he would rather protect than injure him."

"So, my lord, he would, ever since his conversation with Miss Riddle on the subject."

This, indeed, was very honestly said, inasmuch as it was she herself who had furnished him with the mask and other of the disguises.

"Well, I think so; and I believe him to be a gentleman, certainly. This unfortunate tory saved Tom's life and mine the other night; but, independently of that, Mrs. Lindsay, no son of *yours* should have anything to do in his pursuit or capture. You understand me. It is my intention to try what I can do to get

him a pardon from government, and rescue him from the wild and lawless life he is leading."

Mrs. Lindsay merely said, —

"If my son Woodward could render you any assistance, I am sure he would feel great pleasure in doing so, notwithstanding that it was this same *Shawn-na-Middogue* who, perhaps, has murdered his brother, for he is, by no means, out of danger."

"What — he? *Shawn-na-Middogue!* Have you any proof of that?"

"Not positive or legal proof, my lord, but at least a strong moral certainty. However, it is a subject on which I do not wish to speak."

"By the way, I am very stupid; but no wonder. When a man approaches seventy he can't be expected to remember everything. You will excuse me for not inquiring after your son's health; how is he?"

"Indeed, my lord, we know not what to say; neither does the doctor who attends him — the same, by the way, who attended Miss Goodwin. At present he can say neither yes or no to his recovery."

"No, nor will not as long as he can; I know those gentry well. Curse the thing on earth frightens one of them so much as any appearance of convalescence in a patient. I had during my life about half a dozen fits of illness, and whenever they found that I was on the recovery, they always contrived to throw me back with their damned nostrums, for a month or six weeks together, that they might squeeze all they could out of me. O, devilish rogues! devilish rogues!"

Mrs. Lindsay now asked to see his niece, and the peer said he would send her down, after which he

shook hands with her, and once more cautioned her against alluding to the arrangement into which they had entered touching the matrimonial affairs already discussed. It is not our intention to give the conversation between the two ladies, which was, indeed, not one of long duration. Mrs. Lindsay simply stated that she had been deputed by her son, Woodward, to have the honor of making a proposal in his name to her uncle, in which proposal she, Miss Riddle, was deeply concerned, but that her son himself would soon have the greater honor of pleading his own cause with the fair object of his most enthusiastic affection. To this Miss Riddle said neither yes nor no; and, after a further chat upon indifferent topics, the matron took her departure, much satisfied, however, with the apparent suavity of the worthy peer's fair niece.

It matters not how hard and iniquitous the hearts of mothers may be, it is a difficult thing to extinguish in them the sacred principle of maternal affection. Mrs. Lindsay, during her son Charles's illness, and whilst laboring under the apprehension that she was about to lose him, went to his sick room after her return from Lord Cockletown's, and, finding he was but slightly improving, — if improving at all, —she felt herself much moved, and asked him how he felt.

"Indeed, my dear mother," he replied, "I can scarcely say; I hardly know whether I am better or worse."

Harry was in the room at the time, having gone up to ascertain his condition.

"O, come, Charles," said she, "you were always an

affectionate son, and you must strive and recover. If it may give you strength and hope, I now tell you that the property which I intended to leave to Harry here, I shall leave to you. Harry will not require it; he will be well off — much better than you imagine. He will have back that twelve hundred a year when that puny girl dies. She is, probably, dead by this time, and he will, besides, become a wealthy man by marriage."

"But I think, my dear mother, that Harry has the best claim to it; he is your first-born, and your eldest son."

"He will not require it," replied his mother; "he is about to be married to Miss Riddle, the niece of Lord Cockletown."

"Are you quite sure of that, mother?" asked Harry, with a brow as black as midnight.

"There is an arrangement made," she replied; "the marriage settlements are to be drawn up, but left unsigned until the death of Alice Goodwin."

Charles here gave a groan of agony, which, for the life of him, he could not suppress.

"She will not die, I hope," said he; "and, mother, as for the property, leave it to Harry. I don't think you ought to change your contemplated arrangements on my account, even should I recover."

"Yes, Charles, but I will — only contrive and live; you are my son, and as sure as I have life you will be heir to my property."

"But Maria, mother," replied the generous young man; "Maria——" and he looked imploringly and affectionately into her face.

"Maria will have an ample portion; I have taken

care of that. I will not leave my property to those who are strangers to my blood, as a son-in-law must be. No, Charles, you shall have my property. As for Harry, as I said before, he won't stand in need of it."

"Of course you saw Miss Riddle to-day, mother?" asked Harry.

"I did."

"Of course, too, you mentioned the matter to her?"

"To be sure I did."

"And what did she say?"

"Why, I think she acted just as every delicate-minded girl ought. I told her you would have the honor of proposing to herself in person. She heard me, and did not utter a syllable either for or against you. What else should any lady do? You would not have her jump at you, would you? Nothing, however, could be kinder or more gracious than the reception she gave me."

"Certainly not, mother; to give her consent before she was solicited would not be exactly the thing: but the uncle is willing?"

"Upon the conditions I said; but his niece is to know nothing of these conditions: so be cautious when you see her."

"I don't know how it is," replied Harry; "I have been thinking our last interview over; but it strikes me there is, notwithstanding her courtesy of manner, a hard, dry air about her which it is difficult to penetrate. It seems to me as if it were no easy task to ascertain whether she is in jest or earnest. Her eye is too calm and reflecting for my taste."

"But," replied his mother, "those, surely, are two good qualities in any woman, especially in her whom you expect to become your wife."

"Perhaps so," said he; "but she is not my wife yet, my dear mother."

"I wish she was, Harry," observed his brother, "for by all accounts she is an excellent girl, and remarkable for her charity and humanity to the poor."

His mother and Harry then left the room, and both went to her own apartment, where the following conversation took place between them:

"Harry," said she, "I hope you are not angry at the determination I expressed to leave my property to Charles should he recover?"

"Why should I, my dear mother?" he replied; "your property is your own, and of course you may leave it to whomsoever you wish. At all events, it will remain in your own family, and won't go to strangers, like that of my scoundrel old uncle."

"Don't speak so, Harry, of my brother; silly, besotted, and overreached he was when he acted as he did; but he never was a scoundrel, Harry."

"Well, well, let that pass," replied her son; "but the question now is, What am I to do? What step should I first take?"

"I don't understand you."

"Why, I mean whether should I start directly for Ballyspellan and put this puling girl out of pain, or go in a day or two and put the question at once to Miss Riddle, against whom, somehow, I feel a strong antipathy."

"Ah, Harry, that's your grandfather all over; but,

indeed, our family were full of strong antipathies and bitter resentments. Why do you feel an antipathy against the girl?"

"Who can account for antipathies, mother? I cannot account for this."

"And perhaps on her part the poor girl is attached to you."

"Well, but you have not answered my question. How am I to act? Which step should I take first—the *quietus* of 'curds-and-whey,' or the courtship? The sooner matters come to a conclusion the better. I wish, if possible, to know what is before me: I cannot bear uncertainty in this or anything else."

"I scarcely know how to advise you," she replied; "both steps are of the deepest importance, but certainly which to take first is a necessary consideration. I am of opinion that our best plan is simply to take a day or two to think it over, after which we will compare notes and come to a conclusion:" and so it was determined.

We need scarcely assure our readers that honest and affectionate Barney Casey felt a deep interest in the recovery of the generous and kind-hearted Charles Lindsay, nor that he allowed a single day to pass without going, at least two or three times, to ascertain whether there was any appearance of his convalescence On the day following that on which Mrs. Lindsay had declared the future disposition of her property he went to see Charles as usual, when the latter, after having stated to him that he felt much better, and the fever abating, he said,—

"Casey, I have rather strange news for you."

"Be it good, bad, or indifferent, sir," replied Barney, "you could tell me no news that would plaise me half so much as that there is a certainty of your gettin' well again."

"Well, I think there is, Barney. I feel much better to-day than I have done for a long while—but the news, are you not anxious to hear it?"

"Why, I hope I'll hear it soon, Masther Charles, especially if it's good; but if it's not good I'm jack-indifferent about it."

"It *is* good, Barney, to me at least, but not so to my brother Woodward."

Barney's ears, if possible, opened and expanded themselves on hearing this. To him it was a double gratification: first, because it was favorable to the invalid, to whom he was so sincerely attached; and secondly, because it was not so to Woodward, whom he detested.

"My mother yesterday told me that she has made up her mind to leave me all her property if I recover, instead of to Harry, for whom she had originally intended it."

Barney, on hearing this intelligence, was commencing to dance an Irish jig to his own music, and would have done so were it not that the delicate state of the patient prevented him.

"Blood alive, Masther Charles!" he exclaimed, snapping his fingers in a kind of wild triumph, "what are you lying there for? Bounce to your feet like a two-year ould. O, holy Moses, and Melchisedek the divine, ay, and Solomon, the son of St. Pether, in all his glory, but that is news!"

"She told my brother Woodward, face to face, that such was her fixed determination."

"Good again; and what did *he* say?"

"Nothing particular, but that he was glad it was to stay in the family, and not go to strangers, like our uncle's—alluding, of course, to his will in favor of dear Alice Goodwin."

"Ay, but how did he look?" asked Barney.

"I didn't observe, I was rather in pain at the time; but, from a passing glimpse I got, I thought his countenance darkened a little; but I may be mistaken."

"Well, I hope so," said Barney. "I hope so—but —well, I am glad to find you are betther, Masther Charles, and to hear the good piece of fortune you have mentioned. I trust in God your mother will keep her word—that's all."

"As to myself," said Charles, "I am indifferent about the property; all that presses upon my heart is my anxiety for Miss Goodwin's recovery."

"Don't be alarmed on that account," said Casey; "they say the waters of Ballyspellan would bring the dead to life. Now, good by, Masther Charles; don't be cast down — keep up your spirits, for something tells me that there's luck before you, and good luck, too."

After leaving him Barney began to ruminate. He had remarked an extraordinary change in the countenance and deportment of Harry Woodward during the evening before and the earlier part of that day. The plausible serenity of his manner was replaced by unusual gloom, and that abstraction which is produced by

deep and absorbing thought. He seemed so completely wrapped up in constant meditation upon some particular subject, that he absolutely forgot to guard himself against observation or remark, by his usual artifice of manner. He walked alone in the garden, a thing he was not accustomed to do; and during these walks he would stop and pause, then go on slowly and musingly, and stop and pause again. Barney, as we have said before, was a keen observer, and having watched him from a remote corner of the garden in which he was temporarily engaged among some flowers, he came at once to the conclusion that Woodward's mind was burdened with something which heavily depressed his spirits, and occupied his whole attention.

"Ah," exclaimed Barney, "the villain is brewing mischief for some one, but I will watch his motions if I should pass sleepless nights for it. He requires a sharp eye after him, and it will go hard with me or I shall know what his midnight wanderings mean; but in the meantime I must keep calm and quiet, and not seem to watch him."

Whilst Barney, who was unseen by Woodward, having been separated from him by a fruit hedge over which he occasionally peeped, indulged in this soliloquy, the latter, in the same deep and moody meditation, extended his walk, his brows contracted, and dark as midnight.

"The damned hag," said he, speaking unconsciously aloud, "is this the affection which she professed to bear me? Is this the proof she gives of the preference which she often expressed for her favorite son? To leave her property to that miserable milksop, my half-

brother! What devil could have tempted her to this? Not Lindsay, certainly, for I know he would scorn to exercise any control over her in the disposition of her property; and as for Maria, I know *she* would not. It must then have been the milksop himself in some puling fit of pain or illness; and ably must the beggarly knave have managed it when he succeeded in changing the stern and flinty heart of such a she-devil. Yes, unquestionably that must be the true meaning of it; but, be it so for the present; the future is a different question. My plans are laid, and I will put them into operation according as circumstances may guide me."

Whatever those plans were, he seemed to have completed them in his own mind. The darkness departed from his brow; his face assumed its usual expression; and, having satisfied himself by the contemplation of his future course of action, he walked at his usual pace out of the garden.

"Egad," thought Barney, "I'm half a prophet, but I can say no more than I've said. There's mischief in the wind; but whether against Masther Charles or his mother, is a puzzle to me. What a dutiful son, too! A she-devil! Well, upon my sowl, if he weren't her son I could forgive him for *that*, because it hits her off to a hair—but from the lips of a son! O, the blasted scoundrel! Well, no matther, there's a sharp pair of eyes upon him; and that's *all* I can say at present."

When the medical attendant called that day to see his patient he found, on examining Charles, and feeling his pulse, that he was decidedly and rapidly on the recovery. On his way down stairs he was met by Woodward, who said,—

"Well, doctor, is there any chance of my dear brother's recovery?"

"It is beyond a chance now, Mr. Woodward; he is out of danger; and although his convalescence will be slow, it will be sure."

"Thank God," said the cold-blooded hypocrite; "I have never heard intelligence more gratifying. My mother is in the withdrawing-room, and desired me to say that she wishes to speak with you. Of course it is about my brother; and glad I am that you can make so favorable a report of him."

On going down he found Mrs. Lindsay alone, and having taken a seat and made his daily report, she addressed him as follows:

"Doctor, you have taken a great weight off my mind by your account of my son's certain recovery."

"I can say with confidence, as I have already said to his anxious brother, madam, that it is certain, although it will be slow. He is out of danger at last. The wound is beginning to cicatrize, and generates *laudable pus*. His fever, too, is gone; but he is very weak still, — quite emaciated,— and it will require time to place him once more on his legs. Still, the great fact is, that his recovery is certain. Nothing unless agitation of mind can retard it; and I do not see anything which can occasion that."

"Nothing, indeed, doctor; but, doctor, I wish to speak to you on another subject. You have been attending Miss Goodwin during her very strange and severe illness. You have visited her, too, at Ballyspellan."

"I have, madam. She went there by my directions."

"How long is it since you have seen her?"

"I saw her three days ago."

"And how was she?"

"I am afraid beyond hope, madam. She is certainly not better, and I can scarcely say she is worse, because worse she cannot be. The complaint is on her mind; and in that case we all know how difficult it is for a physician to administer to a mind diseased."

"You think, then, she is past recovery?"

"Indeed, madam, I am certain of it, and I deeply regret it, not only for her own sake, but for that of her heart-broken parents."

"My dear doctor—O, by the way, here is your fee; do not be surprised at its amount, for, although your fees have been regularly paid——"

"And liberally, madam."

"Well, in consequence of the favorable and gratifying report which you have this day made, you must pardon an affectionate mother for the compensation which she now offers you. It is far beneath the value of your skill, your anxiety for my son's recovery, and the punctuality of your attendance."

"What! fifty pounds, madam! I cannot accept it," said he, exhibiting it in his hand as he spoke.

"O, but you must, my dear doctor; nor shall the liberality of the mother rest here. Come, doctor, no remonstrance; put it into your pocket, and now hear me. You say Miss Goodwin is past all hope. Would you have any objection to write me a short note stating that fact?"

"How could I, madam?" replied the good-natured, easy man, who, of course, could never dream of her design in asking him the question. Still, it seemed singular and unusual, and quite out of the range of

his experience. This consideration startled him into reflection, and something like a curiosity to ascertain why she, who, he felt aware, was of late at bitter feud with Miss Goodwin and her family — the cause of which was well known throughout the country — should wish to obtain such a document from him.

"Pardon me, madam; pray, may I inquire for what purpose you ask me to furnish such a document?"

"Why, the truth is, doctor, that there are secrets in all families, and, although this is not, strictly speaking, a secret, yet it is a thing that I should not wish to be mentioned out of doors."

"Madam, you cannot for a moment do me such injustice as to imagine that I am capable of violating professional confidence. I consider the confidence you now repose in me, in the capacity of your family physician, as coming under that head."

"You will have no objection, then, to write the note I ask of you?"

"Certainly not, madam."

"But there is Dr. Lendrum, who joined you in consultation in my son's case, as well, I believe, as in Miss Goodwin's. Do you think you could get him to write a note to me in accordance with yours? Speak to him, and tell him that I don't think he has been sufficiently remunerated for his trouble in the consultations you have had with him here."

"I shall do so, madam, and I think he will do himself the pleasure of seeing you in the course of to-morrow."

Both doctors could, with a very good conscience, furnish Mrs. Lindsay with the opinions which she

required. She saw the other medical gentleman on the following day, and, after handing him a handsome *douceur*, he felt no hesitation in corroborating the opinion of his brother physician.

Having procured the documents in question, she transmitted them, enclosed in a letter, to Lord Cockletown, stating that her son Woodward, who had been seized by a pleuritic attack, would not be able, she feared, to pay his intended visit to Miss Riddle so soon as he had expected; but, in the meantime, she had the honor of enclosing him the documents she alluded to on the occasion of her last visit. And this she did with the hope of satisfying his lordship on the subject they had been then discussing, and with a further hope that he might become an advocate for her son, at least until he should be able to plead his own cause with the lady herself; which nothing but indisposition prevented him from doing. The doctor, she added, had advised him to try the waters of the *Spa* of Ballyspellan for a short time, as he had little doubt that they would restore him to perfect health. She sent her love to dear Miss Riddle, and hoped ere long to have the pleasure of clasping her to her heart as a daughter.

CHAPTER XX.

WOODWARD'S VISIT TO BALLYSPELLAN.

After a consultation with his mother our worthy hero prepared for his journey to this once celebrated *Spa*, which possessed even then a certain local celebrity, that subsequently widened to an ampler range. The little village was filled with invalids of all classes; and even the farmers' houses in the vicinity were occupied with individuals in quest of health. The family of the Goodwins, however, were still in deep affliction, although Alice, for the last few days, was progressing favorably. Still, such was her weakness, that she was unable to walk unless supported by two persons, usually her maid and her mother or her father. The terrible influence of the Evil Eye had made too deep and deadly an impression ever, she feared, to be effaced; for, although removed from Woodward's blighting gaze, that eye was perpetually upon her, through the medium of her strong but diseased imagination. And who is there who does not know how strongly the force of imagination acts? On this subject she had now become a perfect hypochondriac. She could not shake it off, it haunted her night and day; and even the influence of society could scarcely banish the dread image of that mysterious and fearful look for a moment.

The society at Ballyspellan was, as the society in

such places usually is, very much mixed and heterogeneous. Many gentry were there — gentlemen at tempting to repair constitutions broken down by dissipation and profligacy; and ladies afflicted with a disease peculiar, in those days, to both sexes, called the *spleen* — a malady which, under that name, has long since disappeared, and is now known by the title of nervous affection. There was a large public room, in imitation of the more celebrated English watering-places, where the more respectable portion of the company met and became acquainted, and where, also, balls and dinners were occasionally held. Not a wreck of this edifice is now standing, although, down to the days of Swift and Delany, it possessed considerable celebrity, as is evident from the ingenious verses written by his friend to the Dean upon this subject.

The principal individuals assembled at it on this occasion were Squire Manifold, whose complaint, as was evident by his three chins, consisted in a rapid tendency to obesity, which his physician had told him might be checked, if he could prevail on himself to eat and drink with a less gluttonous appetite, and take more exercise. He had already had a fit of apoplexy, and it was the apprehension of another, with which he was threatened, that brought him to the *Spa*. The next was Parson Topertoe, whose great enemy was the gout, brought on, of course, by an ascetic and apostolic life. The third was Captain Culverin, whose constitution had suffered severely in the wars, but which he attempted to reinvigorate by a course of hard drinking, in which he found, to his cost, that the remedy was worse than the disease. There were also a great

variety of others, among whom were several widows, whose healthy complexions were anything but a justification for their presence there, especially in the character of invalids. Mr. Goodwin, his wife, and daughter, we need not enumerate. They lodged in the house of a respectable farmer, who lived convenient to the village, where they found themselves exceedingly snug and comfortable. In the next house to them lodged a Father Mulrenin, a friar, who, although he attended the public room and drank the waters, was an admirable specimen of comic humor and robust health. There was also a Miss Rosebud, accompanied by her mother, a blooming widow, who had married old Rosebud, a wealthy bachelor, when he was near sixty. The mother's complaint was also the spleen, or vapors; indeed, to tell the truth, she was moved by an unconquerable and heroic determination to replace poor old Rosebud by a second husband. The last whom we shall enumerate, although not the least, was a very remarkable character of that day, being no other than Cooke, the Pythagorean, from the county of Waterford. He held, of course, the doctrines of Pythagoras, and believed in the transmigration of souls. He lived upon a vegetable diet, and wore no clothing which had been taken or made from the wool or skins of animals, because he knew that they must have been killed before these *exuviæ* could be applied to human use. His dress, consequently, during the inclemency of winter and the heats of summer, consisted altogether of linen, and even his shoes were of vegetable fabric. Our readers, consequently, need not feel surprised at the complaint of the philosopher, which was a chronic and most

excruciating rheumatism that racked every bone in his Pythagorean body. He was, however, like a certain distinguished teetotaler and peace preserver of our own city and our own day, a mild and benevolent man, whose monomania affected nobody but himself, and him it did affect through every bone of his body. He was attended by his own servants, especially by his own cook—for he was a man of wealth and considerable rank in the country—in order that he could rely upon their fidelity in seeing that nothing contrary to his principles might be foisted upon him. He had his carriage, in which he drove out every day, and into which and out of which his servants assisted him. We need scarcely assure our readers that he was the lion of the place, or that no individual there excited either so much interest or curiosity. Of the many others of various, but subordinate classes we shall not speak. Wealthy farmers, professional men, among whom, however, we cannot omit Counsellor Puzzlewell, who, by the way, had one eye upon Miss Rosebud and another upon the comely widow herself, together with several minor grades down to the very paupers of society, were all there.

About this period it was resolved to have a dinner, to be followed by a ball in the latter part of the evening. This was the project of Squire Manifold, whose physician attended him like, or rather very unlike, his shadow, for he was a small thin man, with sharp eyes and keen features, and so slight that if put into the scale against the shadow he would scarcely weigh it up. The squire's wife, who was a cripple, insisted that he should accompany her husband, in order to see that

he might not gorge himself into the apoplectic fit with which he was threatened. His first had a peculiar and melancholy, though, to spectators, a ludicrous effect upon him. He was now so stupid, and made such blunders in conversation, that the comic effect of them was irresistible; especially to those who were not aware of the cause of it, but looked upon the whole thing as his natural manner. He had been, ever since his arrival at the accursed *Spa*, kept by Doctor Doolittle upon short commons, both as to food and drink; and what with the effect of the waters, and severe purgatives administered by the doctor, he felt himself in a state little short of purgatory itself. The meagre regimen to which he was so mercilessly subjected gave him the appetite of a shark. Indeed, the bill of fare prescribed for him was scarcely sufficient to sustain a boy of twelve years of age. In consequence of this he had got it into his head that the season was a season of famine, and on this calamitous dispensation of Providence he kept harping from morning to night. The idea of the dinner, however, was hailed by them all as a very agreeable project, for which the squire, who only thought of the opportunity it would give himself to enjoy a surfeit, was highly complimented. It was to be in the shape of a modern *table d'hote:* every gentleman was to pay for himself and such of his party as accompanied him to it. Even the Pythagorean relished the proposal, for although peculiar in his opinions, he was sufficiently liberal, and too much of a gentleman, to quarrel with those who differed from him. Mr. Goodwin, too, was a consenting party, and mentioned the subject to Alice in a cheerful spirit, and with a hope

that she might be able to rally and attend it. She promised to do so if she could; but said it chiefly depended on the state of health in which she might find herself. Indeed, if ever a beautiful and interesting girl was to be pitied, she, most unquestionably, was an object of the deepest compassion. It was not merely what she had to suffer from the Evil Eye of the demon Woodward, but from the fact which had reached her ears of what she considered the profligate conduct of his brother Charles, once her betrothed lover. This latter reflection, associated with the probability of his death, when joined to the terrible malady which Woodward had inflicted on her, may enable our readers to perceive what the poor girl had to suffer. Still she told her father that she would be present if her health permitted her, "especially," she added, "as there was no possibility of Woodward being among the guests."

"Why, my dear child," said her father, "what could put such an absurd apprehension into your head?"

"Because, papa, I don't think he will ever let me out of his power until he kills me. I don't think he will come here; but I dread to return home, because I fear that if I do he will obtrude himself on me; and I feel that another gaze of his eye would occasion my death."

"I would call him out," replied the father, "and shoot him like a dog, to which honest and faithful animal it is a sin to compare the villain."

"And then I might be left fatherless!" she exclaimed. "O, papa, promise me that you never will have recourse to that dreadful alternative."

"But, my darling, I only said so upon the supposition of your death by him."

"But mamma!"

"Come, come, Alice, get up your spirits, and be able to attend this dinner. It will cheer you and do you good. We have been discussing soap bubbles. Give up thinking of the scoundrel, and you will soon feel yourself well enough. In about another month we will start for Killarney, and see the lakes and the magnificent scenery by which they are surrounded."

"Well, dear papa, I shall go to this dinner if I am at all able; but indeed I do not expect to be able."

In the meantime every preparation was made for the forthcoming banquet. It was to be on a large scale, and many of the neighboring gentry and their families were asked to it. The knowledge that Cooke, the Pythagorean, was at the Well had taken wind, and a strong curiosity had gone abroad to see him. This eccentric gentleman's appearance was exceedingly original, if not startling. He was, at least, six feet two, but so thin, fleshless, and attenuated, that he resembled a living skeleton. This was the more strange, inasmuch as in his earlier days he had been robust and stout, approaching even to corpulency. His dress was as remarkable as his person, if not more so. It consisted of bleached linen, and was exceedingly white; and so particular was he in point of cleanliness, that he put on a fresh dress every day. He wore a pair of long pantaloons that, unfortunately for his symmetry, adhered to his legs and thighs as closely as the skin; and as the aforesaid legs and thighs were skeletonic, nothing could be more ludicrous than his appearance in them. His vest was equally close; and as the hanging cloak which he wore over it did not reach far

enough down his back, it was impossible to view him behind without convulsive laughter. His shoes were made of some description of foreign bark, which had by some chemical process been tanned into toughness, and on his head he wore a turban of linen, made of the same material which furnished his other garments. Altogether, a more ludicrous figure could not be seen, especially if a person happened to stand behind him when he bowed. Notwithstanding all this, however, he possessed the manners and bearing of a gentleman; the only thing remarkable about him, beyond what we have described, being a peculiar wildness of the eyes, accompanied, however, by an unquestionable expression of great benignity.

We leave the company at the Well preparing for the forthcoming dinner and return to Rathfillan House, where Harry Woodward is making arrangements for his journey to Ballyspellan, which now we believe goes by the name of Johnstown. Under every circumstance of his life he was a plotter and a planner, and had at all times some private speculation in view. On the present occasion, in addition to his murderous design upon Miss Goodwin, he resolved to become a wife-hunter, for, being well acquainted, as he was, with the tone and temper of English society at its most celebrated watering places, and the matrimonial projects and intrigues which abound at them, he took it for granted that he might stand a chance of making a successful hit with a view to matrimony. One thing struck him, however, which was, that he had no horse, and could not go there mounted, as a gentleman ought. It is true his stepfather had several horses, but not one of them beyond the character of a common hack. He resolved,

therefore, to purchase a becoming nag for his journey, and with this object he called upon a neighboring farmer, named Murray, who possessed a very beautiful animal, rising four, and which he learned was to be disposed of.

"Mr. Murray," said he, "I understand you have a young horse for sale."

"I have, sir," replied Murray; "and a better piece of flesh is not in the county he stands in."

"Could I see him?"

"Certainly, sir, and try him, too. He is not flesh and bone at all, sir — devil a thing he is but quicksilver. Here, Paudeen, saddle Brien Boro for this gentleman. You won't require wings, Mr. Woodward; Brien Boro will show you how to fly without them."

"Well," replied Woodward, "trial's all; but at any rate, I'm willing to prefer good flesh and bone to quicksilver."

In a few minutes the horse was brought out, saddled and bridled, and Woodward, who certainly was an excellent horseman, mounted him and tried his paces.

"Well, sir," said Murray, "how do you like him?"

"I like him well," said Woodward. "His temper is good, I know, by his docility to the bit."

"Yes, but you haven't tried him at a ditch; follow me and I'll show you as pretty a one as ever a horse crossed, and you may take my word it isn't every horse could cross *it*. You have a good firm seat, sir; and I know you will both do it in sportsman-like style."

Having reached the ditch, which certainly was a rasper, Woodward reined round the animal, who crossed it like a swallow.

"Now," said Murray, "unless you wish to ride half a mile in order to get back, you must cross it again."

This was accordingly done in admirable style, both by man and horse; and Woodward, having ridden him back to the farm-yard, dismounted, highly satisfied with the animal's action and powers.

"Now, Mr. Murray," said he, "what's his price?"

"Fifty guineas, sir; neither more nor less."

"Say thirty and we'll deal."

"I don't want money, sir," replied the sturdy farmer, "and I won't part with the horse under his value I will get what I ask for him."

"Say thirty-five."

"Not a cross under the round half hundred; and I'm glad it is not your mother that is buying him."

"Why so?" asked Woodward; and his eye darkly sparkled with its malignant influence.

"Why, sir, because if I didn't sell him to her at her own terms, he would be worth very little in a few days afterwards."

The observation was certainly an offensive one, especially when made to her son.

"Will you take forty for him?" asked Woodward, coolly.

"Not a penny, sir, under what I said. You are clearly a good judge of a horse, Mr. Woodward, and I wonder that a gentleman like you would offer me less than I ask, because you cannot but know that it is under his value."

"I will give no more," replied Woodward; "so there is an end to it. Let me see the horse's eyes."

He placed himself before the animal, and looked

steadily into his eyes for about five minutes, after which he said,—

"I think, Mr. Murray, you would have acted more prudently had you taken my offer. I bade you full value for the horse."

To Murray's astonishment the animal began to tremble excessively; the perspiration was seen to flow from him in torrents; he appeared feeble and collapsed; and seemed scarcely able to stand on his limbs, which were shaking as if with terror under him.

"Why, Mr. Murray," said Woodward, "I am very glad I did not buy him; the beast is ill, and will be for the dogs of the neighborhood in three days' time."

"Until the last five minutes, sir, there wasn't a sounder horse in Europe."

"Look at him now, then," said Woodward; "do you call that a sound horse? Take him into the stable; before the expiration of three days you will be flaying him."

His words were prophetic. In three days' time the fine and healthy animal was a carcass.

"Ah!" said the farmer, when he saw the horse lying dead before him, "this fellow is his mother's son. From the time he looked into the horse's eyes the poor beast sank so rapidly that he didn't pass the third day alive. And there are fifty guineas out of my pocket. The curse of God on him wherever he goes!"

Woodward provided himself, however, with another horse, and in due time set out for the *Spa* at Ballyspellan.

The dinner was now fixed for a certain day, and Squire Manifold felt himself in high spirits as often as he could recollect the circumstance—which, indeed, was but rarely, the worthy epicure's memory having nearly abandoned him. Topertoe, of the gout, and he were old aquaintances and companions, and had spent many a merry night together—both, as the proverb has it, being tarred with the same stick. Topertoe was as great a glutton as the other, but without his desperate voracity in food, whilst in drink he equalled if he did not surpass him. Manifold would have forgotten every thing about the dinner had he not from time to time been reminded of it by his companion.

"Manifold, we will have a great day on Thursday."

"Great!" exclaimed Manifold, who, in addition to his other stupidities, was as deaf as a post; "great—eh? What size will it be?"

"What size will it be? Why, confound it, man, don't you know what I'm saying?"

"No, I don't—yes, I do—you are talking about something great. O, I know now—your toe you mean—where the gout lies. They say it begins at the great toe, and goes up to the stomach. I suppose Alexander the Great was gouty, and got his name from that."

"I'm talking of the great dinner we're to have on Thursday," shouted Topertoe. "We'll have a splendid feed then, my famous old trencherman, and I'll take care that Doctor Doolittle shall not stint you."

"There won't be any toast and water—eh?"

"Devil a mouthful; and we are to have the celebrated Cooke, the Pythagorean."

"Ay, but is he a good cook?"

"He's the celebrated Pythagorean, I tell you."

"Pythagorean — what's that? I thought you said he was a cook. Does he understand venison properly? O, good Lord! what a life I'm leading! Toast and water — toast and water. But it's all the result of this famine. And yet they know I'm wealthy. I say, what's this your name is?"

"Never mind that — an old acquaintance. Hell and torments! what's this? O!"

"The weather's pleasant, Topertoe. I say, Topertoe, what's this your name is?"

"O! O!" exclaimed Topertoe, who felt one or two desperate twinges of his prevailing malady; "curse me, Manifold, but I think I would exchange with you; your complaint is an easy one compared to mine. You are a mere block, and will pop off without pain, instead of being racked like a soul in perdition as I am."

"Your soul in perdition — well, I suppose it will. But don't groan and scream so — you are not there yet; when you are you will have plenty of time to groan and scream. As for myself, I will be likely to sleep it out there. I think, by the way, I had the pleasure of knowing you before; your face is familiar to me. What's this you call the man that attends sick people?"

"A doctor. O! O! Hell and torments! what is this? Yes, a doctor. O! O!"

"Ay, a doctor. Confound me, but I think my head's going around like a top. Yes, a—a—a—a doctor. Well, the doctor says that I and Parson Topertoe

led a nice life of it — one a glutton and the other a drunkard. Do you know Topertoe? Because if you don't I do. He is a damned scoundrel, and squeezed his tithes out of the people with pincers of blood."

"Manifold, your gluttony has brought you to a fine pass. Are you alive or not?"

"Eh? Curse all dry toast and water! But it's all the consequence of this year of famine. Pray, sir, what do you eat?"

"Beef, mutton, venison, fowl, ham, turbot, salmon, black sole, with all the proper and corresponding sauces and condiments."

"O Lord! and no toast and water, beef tea, and oatmeal gruel? Heavens! how I wish this year of famine was past. It will be the death of me. I say, what's this your name is? Your face is familiar to me somehow. Could you aid me in poisoning the— the — what you call him — ay, the doctor?"

"Nothing more easily done, my dear Manifold. Contrive to let him take one of his own doses, and he's done for."

"Wouldn't ratsbane do? I often think he's a rat."

"In face and eyes he certainly looks very like one."

"Are you aware, sir, that my wife's a cripple? She's paralyzed in her lower limbs."

"I am perfectly aware of that melancholy fact."

"Are you aware that she's jealous of me?"

"No, not that she's jealous of you *now;* but perfectly aware that she *had* good cause to be so."

"Ay, but the devil of it is that the paralysis you speak of never reached her tongue."

"*I* speak of—'twas yourself spoke of it."

"She sent me here because it happens to be a year of famine — what is commonly called a hard season — and she stitched the little blasted doctor to me that I might die legitimately under medical advice. Isn't that very like murder —isn't it?"

"Ah, my dear friend, thank God that you are not a parson, having a handsome wife and a handsome curate, with the gout to support you and keep you comfortable. You would then feel that there are other twinges worse than those of the gout."

"Ay, but is there anything wrong about your head?"

"Heaven knows. About a twelvemonth ago I felt as if there were two sprouts budding out of my forehead, but on putting up my hand I could feel nothing. It was as smooth as ever. It must have been hypochondriasis. The curate, though, is a handsome dog, and, like yourself, it was my wife sent me here."

"Is your wife a cripple?"

"Faith, anything but that."

"How is her tongue? No paralysis in that quarter?"

"On the contrary, she is calm and soft-spoken, and perfectly sweet and angelic in her manner."

"But was it in consequence of the famine she sent you here? Toast and water!—toast and water! O Lord!"

This dialogue took place in Manifold's lodgings, where Topertoe, aided by a crutch and his servant, was in the habit of visiting him. To Manifold, indeed, this was a penal settlement, in consequence of the reasons which we have already stated.

The Pythagorean, as well as Topertoe, was also occasionally forced to the use of crutches: and it was certainly a strange and remarkable thing to witness two men, each at the extreme point of social indulgence, and each departing from reason and commonsense, suffering from the consequences of their respective errors; Manifold, a most voracious fellow, knocked on the head by an attack of apoplexy, and Cooke, the philosopher, suffering the tortures of the damned from a most violent rheumatism, produced by a monomania which compelled him to decline the simple enjoyment of reasonable food and dress. Cooke's monomania, however, was a rare one. In *Blackwood's Magazine* there appeared, several years ago, an admirable writer, whose name we now forget, under the title of a modern Pythagorean; but that was merely a *nom de guerre*, adopted, probably, to excite a stronger interest in the perusal of his productions. Here, however, was a man in whom the principle existed upon what he considered rational and philosophic grounds. He had gotten the philosophical blockhead's crotchet into his head, and carried the principle, in a practical point of view, much further than ever the old fool himself did in his life.

CHAPTER XXI.

THE DINNER AT BALLYSPELLAN.—THE APPEARANCE OF WOODWARD.—VALENTINE GREATRAKES.

THE Thursday appointed for the dinner at length arrived. The little village was all alive with stir and bustle, inasmuch as for several months no such important event had taken place. It was, in fact, a gala day; and the poorer inhabitants crowded about the inn to watch the guests arriving, and the paupers to solicit their alms. Twelve or one was then the usual hour for dinner, but in consequence of the large scale on which it was to take place and the unusual preparations necessary, it was not until the hour of two that the guests sat down to table. Some of the principal names we have already mentioned—all the males, of course, invalids—but, as we have said, there were a good number of the surrounding gentry, their wives and daughters, so that the *fête* was expected to come off with great *éclat*. Topertoe was dressed, as was then the custom, in full canonical costume, with his silk cassock and bands, for he was a doctor of divinity; and Manifold was habited in the usual dress of the day—his falling collar exhibiting a neck whose thickness took away all surprise as to his tendency to apoplexy. The lengthy figure of the unsubstantial Pythagorean was cased in linen garments, almost snow-white, through which his anatomy might be read

as distinctly as if his living skeleton was naked before them. Mrs. Rosebud was blooming and expanded into full flower, whilst Miss Rosebud was just in that interesting state when the leaves are apparently in the act of bursting out and bestowing their beauty and fragrance on the gratified senses of the beholder. Dr. Doolittle, who was a regular wag—indeed too much so ever to succeed in his profession — entered the room with his three-cocked hat under his arm, and the usual gold-headed cane in his hand; and, after saluting the company, looked about after Manifold, his patient. He saluted the Pythagorean, and complimented him upon his philosophy, and the healthful habits engendered by a vegetable diet, and so primitive a linen dress—a dress, he said, which, in addition to its other advantages, ought to be generally adopted, if only for the sake of its capacity for showing off the symmetry of the figure. He was himself a warm admirer of the principle, and begged to have the honor of shaking hands with the gentleman who had the courage to carry it out against all the prejudices of a besotted world. He accordingly seized the philosopher's hand, which was then in a desperately rheumatic state, as the little scoundrel well knew, and gave it such a squeeze of respect and admiration that the Pythagorean emitted a yell which astonished and alarmed the whole room.

"Death and torture, sir—why did you squeeze my rheumatic hand in such a manner?"

"Pardon me, Mr. Cooke—respect and admiration for your principles."

"Well, sir, I will thank you to express what you

may feel in plain language, but not in such damnable squeezes as that."

"Pardon me, again, sir; I was ignorant that the rheumatism was in your hand; you know I am not your physician; perhaps if I were you could bear a friendly shake of it without all that agony. I very much regret the pain I unconsciously, and from motives of the highest respect, have put you to."

"It is gone — do not mention it," said the benevolent philosopher. "Perhaps I may try your skill some of these days."

"I assure you, sir," said Doolittle, "that I am forcing Mr. Manifold here to avail himself of your system — a simple vegetable diet."

"O Lord!" exclaimed Manifold, in a soliloquy — for he was perfectly unconscious of what was going on — "toast and water, toast and water! That and a season of famine — what a prospect is before me! Doolittle is a rat, and I will hire somebody to give him ratsbane. Nothing but a vegetable diet, and be hanged to him! What's ratsbane an ounce?"

"You hear, sir," said Doolittle, addressing the Pythagorean; "you perceive that I am adopting your system?"

"Mr. Doolittle," replied Cooke, "from this day forth you are my physician — I intrust you with the management of my rheumatism; but, in the meantime, I think the room is devilishly cold."

Captain Culverin now entered, swathed up, and, as was evident, somewhat tipsy.

"Eh! confound me, philosopher, your hand," he exclaimed, putting out his own to shake hands with him.

"I can't, sir," replied Cooke; "I am afflicted with rheumatism. You seem unwell, captain; but if you gave up spirituous liquors—such as wine and usquebaugh—you would find yourself the better for it."

"What does all this mean?" asked Manifold. "At all events Doolittle's a rat. A vegetable diet, a year of famine, toast, and water—O Lord!"

Dinner, however, came, and the little waggish doctor could not, for the life of him, avoid his jokes. Cooke's dish of vegetables was placed for him at a particular part of the table; but the doctor, taking Manifold by the hand, placed him in the philosopher's seat, whom he afterwards set before a magnificent sirloin of beef—for, truth to speak, the little man acted as a kind of master of the ceremonies to the company at Ballyspellan.

"What's this?" exclaimed Manifold. "Perdition! here is nothing but a dish of asparagus before me! What kind of treatment is this? Were we not to have a great dinner, Topertoe? Alexander the Great!"

"And who placed me before a sirloin of beef?" asked the philosopher; "I, who follow the principles of the Great Pythagorean. I am nearly sick already with the fume of it. Good heavens! a sirloin of beef before a vegetarian."

Of course Manifold and the philosopher exchanged places, and the dinner proceeded. Mr. and Mrs. Goodwin were present, but Alice was unable to come, although anxious to do so in order to oblige her parents. It is unnecessary to describe the gastric feats of Manifold and Topertoe. The voracity of the former was astonishing, nor was that of the latter much less;

and when the dishes were removed and the tables cleared for their compotations, the faces of both gentlemen appeared as if they were about to explode. The table was now supplied with every variety of liquor, and the conversation began to assume that convivial tone peculiar to such assemblies. The little doctor was placed between Manifold and the Pythagorean, who, by the way, was exceedingly short-sighted; and on the other side of him sat Parson Topertoe, who seemed to feel something like a reprieve from his gout. When the liquor was placed on the table, after dinner, the Pythagorean got to his feet, filled a large glass of water, and taking a gulp of it, leaving it about half full, he proceeded as follows:

"Gentlemen: considering the state of morals in our unfortunate country, arising as it does from the use of intoxicating liquors and the flesh of animals, I feel myself called upon to impress upon the consciences of this respectable auditory the necessity of studying the admirable principles of the great philosopher whose simplicity of life in food and drink I humbly endeavor to imitate. Modern society, my friends, is all wrong, and, of course, is proceeding upon an erroneous and pernicious system—that of eating the flesh of animals and indulging in the use, or rather the abuse, of liquors, that heat the blood and intoxicate the brain into the indulgence of passion and the commission of crime."

Here the little doctor threw a glass of usquebaugh—now called whiskey—into the half-emptied cup which stood before Cooke.

"A vegetable diet, gentlemen, is that which was appointed for us by Providence, and water like this our

drink. And, indeed, water like this is delicious drink. The *Spa* of Ballyspellan stands unrivalled for strength and flavor, and its capacity of exhilarating the animal spirits is extraordinary. You see, gentlemen, how copiously I drink it; servant, fill my glass again—thank you."

In the meantime, and before he touched it, the doctor whipped another glass of whiskey into it — an act which the Pythagorean, who was, as we have said, unusually tall, and kept his eye upon the company, could neither suspect nor see.

"It has been ignorantly said that the structure of the human mouth is an argument against me as to the quality of our food, and that the growth of grapes is a proof that wine was ordained to be drank by men. It is perfectly well known that a man may eat a bushel of grapes without getting drunk; because the pure vegetable possesses no intoxicating power any more than the water which I am now drinking—and delicious water it is!"

Here the doctor dug his elbow into the fat ribs of Topertoe, whose face, in the meantime, seemed in a blaze of indignation.

"I tell you what, philosopher, curse me, but you are an infidel."

"I have the honor, sir," he replied, "to be an infidel—as every philosopher is. The truth of what I am stating to you has been tested by philosophers, and it has been ascertained that no quantity of grapes eaten by an individual could make him drunk."

The doctor gave the parson another dig, and winked at him to keep quiet.

"Sir," said the parson, unable, however, to restrain himself, "confound me if ever I heard such infidel

opinions expressed in my life. Damn your philosophy; it is cursed nonsense, and nothing else."

"A vegetable diet," proceeded Cooke, "is a guarantee for health and long life—— O Lord!" he exclaimed, "this accursed rheumatism will be the death of me."

"What is he saying?" asked Manifold.

"He is talking philosophy," replied the doctor, with a comic grin, "and recommending a vegetable diet and pure water."

"A devilish scoundrel," said Manifold. "He's a rat, too. Doolittle's a rat; but I'll poison him; yes, I'll dose him with ratsbane, and then I can eat, drink, and swill away. Is the philosopher's wife a cripple?"

"He has no wife," replied Doolittle.

"And what the devil, then, is he a philosopher for? What on earth challenges philosophy in a husband so much as a wife,—especially if she's a cripple and has the use of her tongue?"

"Not being a married man myself," replied the doctor, "I can give you no information on the subject; or rather I could if I would; but it would not be for your comfort:—ask Manifold."

"Ay; but he says there's something wrong about his head—sprouts pressing up, or something that way. Ask Mrs. Rosebud will she hob or nob with me. Mrs. Rosebud," he proceeded, addressing the widow, "hob or nob?"

Mrs. Rosebud, knowing that he was nothing more nor less than a gouty old parson, bowed to him very coldly, but accepted his challenge, nothwithstanding.

"Mrs. Rosebud," he added, "what kind of a man was old Rosebud?"

"His family name," replied the widow, "was not Rosebud but Yellowboy; and, indeed, to speak the truth, my dear old Rosebud had all the marks and tokens of the original family name upon him, for he was as thin as the philosopher there, and as yellow as saffron. His mother, however, the night before he was born, dreamed that she was presented with a rosebud, and the name, being somewhat poetical, was adopted by himself and the family as a kind of set-off against the duck-foot color of the ancestral skin."

The philospher, in the meantime, finding himself interrupted, stood, with a complacent countenance, awaiting a pause in which he might proceed. At length he got an opportunity of resuming.

"The world," he added, "knows but little of the great founder of so many systems and theories connected with human life and philosophy. It was he who invented the multiplication table, and solved the forty-seventh proposition of the first book of Euclid. It was he who, from his profound knowledge of music, first discovered the music of the spheres—a divine harmony, which, from its unbroken continuity, and incessant play in the heavenly bodies, we are incapable of hearing."

"Where the deuce, then, is the use of it?" cried Captain Culverin; "it must be a very odd kind of music which we cannot hear."

"The great Samian, sir, could hear it; but only in his heart and intellect, and after he had discovered the truthful doctrine of the *metempsychosis*, or transmigration of souls."

"The transmigration of *soles;* why, my dear sir,

doesn't every fishwoman understand that?" observed the captain. "Was the fellow a fisherman?"

"His great discovery, however, if mankind would only adopt it, was the healthful one of a vegetable diet, carried out by a fixed determination not to wear any dress made up from the skins or fleeces of animals that have been slain by man, but philosophically to confine himself to plain linen as I do. O Lord! this rheumatism will be the death of me. Pythagoras was one of the greatest philosophers."

Here the doctor threw another glass of usquebaugh into the cup which stood before the Pythagorean, which act, in consequence of his great height and short sight, he did not perceive, but imagined that he was drinking the well water.

"Philosopher," said Captain Culverin, "hob or nob, a glass with you."

"With pleasure, captain," said the Pythagorean, "only I wish you would adopt my principles—a vegetable diet and *aqua pura*."

"Upon my credit," observed Father Mulrenin, "I think the *aqua pura* is the best of it. It is blessed water, this well water, and it ought to be so, because the parson consecrated it. Hob or nob with me, Mr. Cooke."

"With pleasure, sir," replied Mr. Cooke, again; "and I do assure you, Father Mulrenin, that I think the parson's consecration has improved the water."

"Sorra doubt of it," replied the friar; "and I am sure the doctor there will support me in the article of the parson's consecration."

"The great Samian," proceeded Cooke, "the great Samian——"

"My dear philosopher," said the facetious friar, "never mind your great Samian, but follow up your principles and drink your water."

The mischievous doctor had thrown another glass into his cup: "Drink your water, and set us all a philosophical example of sobriety."

"That I always do," said the philosopher, staggering a little; "that I always do: the water is delicious, and I think my rheumatism has departed from me. Mr. Manifold, hob or nob!"

"No," replied Manifold, "confound me if I will. You are the fellow that eats nothing but vegetables, and drinks nothing but water. Do you think I will hob or nob with a water-drinking rascal like you? Do you think I will put my wine against your paltry water?"

"Don't call it paltry," replied the Pythagorean; "it is delicious. You know not how it elevates the spirits and, so to speak, philosophizes the whole system of man. I am beginning to feel extremely happy."

"I think so," replied the friar; "but wasn't it a fact, as a proof of your *metempsychosis*, that the great author of your doctrine was at the siege of Troy some centuries before he came into the world as the philosopher Pythagoras?"

"Yes, sir," replied his follower, "he fought for the Greeks in the character of Euphorbus, in the Trojan war, was Hermatynus, and afterwards a fisherman; his next transformation having been into the body of Pythagoras."

"What an extraordinary memory he must have had," said the friar. "Now, can you yourself remem-

ber all the bodies your soul has passed through? — but before I expect you to answer me,—hob or nob again,—this is famous water, my dear philosopher."

"It is famous water, Father Mulrenin; and the parson's consecration has given it a power of exhilaration which is astonishing." The doctor had thrown another glass of usquebaugh into his cup, of course unobserved.

"Why," said the friar, "if I'm not much mistaken, you will feel the benefit of it. It is purely philosophical water, and fit for a philosopher like you to drink."

The company now were divided into little knots, and the worthy philosopher found it necessary to take his seat. He felt himself in a state of mind which he could not understand; but the delicious flavor of the water still clung to him, and, owing to his shortness of sight, and the doctor's wicked wit,—if wit it could be called,—he continued drinking spirits and water until he became perfectly—or, in the ordinary phrase —blind drunk, and was obliged to be carried to bed.

In the meantime, a new individual had arrived; and, having ascertained from the servants that there was a great dinner on that day, he inquired if Mr. Goodwin and his family were present at it. He was informed that Mr. Goodwin and Mrs. Goodwin were there, but that Miss Goodwin was unable to come. He asked where Mr. Goodwin and Mrs. Goodwin resided, and, having been informed on this point, he immediately passed to the farmer's house where they lodged.

Now, it so happened that there was a neat garden attached to the house, in which was an arbor of willows where Miss Goodwin was in the habit of sitting,

and amusing herself by the perusal of a book. It contained an arm-chair, in which she frequently reclined, sometimes after the very slight exertion of walking; it also happened that she occasionally fell asleep. There were two modes of approach to the farmer's house—one by the ordinary pathway, and another much shorter, which led by a gate that opened into the garden. By this last the guide who pointed out the house to Woodward directed him to proceed, and he did so. On passing through, his eye caught the summer house, and he saw at a glance that Alice Goodwin was there, and asleep. She was, indeed, asleep, but it was a troubled sleep, for the demon gaze of the terrible eye which she dreaded, and which had almost blasted her out of life, she imagined was once more fixed upon her. Woodward approached with a stealthy step, and saw that, even although asleep, she was deeply agitated, as was evident by her moanings. He contemplated her features for a brief space.

"Ah," he said to himself, "I have done my work. Although beautiful, the stamp of death is upon her. One last gaze and it will all be over. I am before her. in her dream. My eye is upon her in her morbid and diseased imagination, but what will the consequence be when she awakens and finds it upon her in reality?"

As those thoughts passed through his mind, she gave a scream, and exclaimed,—

"O, take him away! take him away! he is killing me!" and as she uttered the words she awoke.

Now, thought he, to secure my twelve hundred a year; now, for one glance, with the power of hell in

its blighting influence, and all is over; my twelve hundred is safe to me and mine forever.

On awakening from her terrible dream, the first object that presented itself to her was the fixed gaze of that terrific eye. It was now wrought up to such a concentration of malignity as surpassed all that even her imagination had ever formed of it. Fixed—diabolical in its aspect, and steady as fate itself—it poured upon the weak and alarmed girl such a flood of venomous and prostrating influence that her shrieks were too feeble to reach the house when calling for assistance. She seemed to have been fascinated to her own destruction. There the eye was fastened upon her, and she felt herself deprived of the power of removing her own from his.

"O my God!" she exclaimed, "I am lost — help, help; the murderous eye is upon me!"

"It is enough," said Woodward; "good by, Miss Goodwin. I was simply contemplating your beauty, and I am sorry to see that you are in so weak a state. Present my compliments to your father and mother; and think of me as a man whose affection you have indignantly spurned—a man, however, whose eye, whatever his heart may be, is not to be trifled with."

He then made her a low bow, and took his departure back through the garden.

"It is over," said he; "*finitum est*, the property is mine; she cannot be saved now; I have taken her life; but no one can say that I have shed her blood. My precious mother will be delighted to hear this. Now, we will be free to act with old Cockletown and his niece; and if she does not turn out a good wife—

if she crosses me in my amours—for amours I will have,—I shall let her, too, feel what my eye can do." Alice's screams, after his departure from the garden, brought out Sarah Sullivan, who, aided by another servant, assisted her between them to reach the house, where she was put to bed in such a state of weakness, alarm, and terror as cannot be described. Her father and mother were immediately sent for, and, on arriving at her bedside, found her apparently in a dying state. All she could find voice to utter was,—

"He was here—his eye was upon me in the summer house. I feel I am dying."

Doctor Doolittle and Father Mulrenin were both sent for, but she had fallen into an exhausted slumber, and it was deemed better not to disturb her until she might gain some strength by sleep. Her parents, who felt so anxious about her health, and the faint hopes of her recovery, now made fainter by the incident which had just occurred, did not return to the assembly, and the consequence was that Woodward and they did not meet.

When the hour for the dance, however, arrived, the tables for refreshments were placed in other and smaller rooms, and the larger one in which they had dined was cleared out for the ball. The simple-hearted Pythagorean had slept himself sober, without being aware of the cause of his breakdown at the dinner, and he now appeared among them in a gala dress of snow-white linen. He was no enemy to healthy amusements, for he could not forget that the great philosopher whom he followed had won public prizes at the Olympic games. He consequently frisked about in the dance

with an awkwardness and a disregard of the graces of motion, which, especially in the jigs, convulsed the whole assembly, nor did any one among them laugh more loudly than he did himself. He especially addressed himself to, and danced with, Mrs. Rosebud, who, as she was short, fat, and plump, exhibited as ludicrous a contrast with the almost naked anatomical structure which frisked before her as the imagination could conceive.

"Upon my credit," observed the friar, "I see that extremes may meet. Look at the pilosopher, how he trebles and capers it before the widow. Faith, I should not feel surprised if he made Mrs. Pythagoras of her before long."

This, however, was not the worst of it, for what or who but the devil himself should tempt the parson, with his gout strong upon him, to select Miss Rosebud for a dance, whilst the philosophic rheumatist was frisking it as well as he could with her mother? The room was in an uproar. Miss Rosebud, who possessed much wicked humor, having, as the lady always has, the privilege, called for one of the liveliest tunes then known. The parson's attempt to keep time made the uproar still greater; but at length it ceased, for neither the philosopher nor the parson could hold out any longer, and each retired in a state of torture to his seat. The mirth having now subsided, a gentleman entered the room, admirably dressed, on whom the attention of the whole company was turned. He was tall, elegantly formed, and at a first glance was handsome. The expression of his eyes, however, was striking—startling. It was good—brilliant; it was bad and

strange, and, to those who examined it closely, such as they had never witnessed before. Still he was evidently a gentleman: there could be no mistake about that. His manner, his dress, and his whole bearing, made them all feel that he was entitled to respect and courtesy. Little did they imagine that he was a murderer, and that he entered the room under the gratifying impression of his having killed Alice Goodwin. It was Harry Woodward. The evening was now advanced, but, after his introduction to the company, he joined in their amusements, and had the pleasure of dancing with both Mrs. Rosebud and her daughter; and after having concluded his dance with the latter, some tidings reached the room, which struck the whole company with a feeling of awe. It was at first whispered about, but it at length became the general topic of conversation. Alice Goodwin was dying, and her parents were in a state of distraction. Nobody could tell why, but it appeared she was at the last gasp, and that there was some mystery in her malady. Many speculations were broached upon the subject. Woodward preserved silence for a time, but just as he was about to make some observations with reference to her illness, a tall, handsome gentleman entered the room and bowed with much grace to the company.

Father Mulrenin started up, and, shaking hands with him, said,—

"I know now, sir, that you have got my letter."

"I have got it," replied the other, "and I am here accordingly."

As he spoke, his eye glanced around the room, the most distinguished figure in which, beyond compari

son, was that of Woodward, who instantly recognized him as the gentleman whom he had met on the morning of his departure from the hospitable roof of Mr. Goodwin, on his return home, and, we may add, between whom and himself that extraordinary trial of the power of *will*, as manifested by the power of the eye, took place so completely to his own discomfiture. They were both gentlemen, and bowed to each other very courteously, after which they approached and shook hands, and whilst the stranger held Woodward's hand in his during their short but friendly chat, it was observed that Woodward's face got as pale as death, and he almost immediately tottered towards a seat from weakness.

"Don't be alarmed," said the stranger; "you now *feel* that the principle of *good* is always able to overcome the principle of *evil*."

"Who or what are you?" asked Woodward, faintly.

"I am a plain country gentleman, sir; and something more, a man of wealth and distinction; but who, unlike my friend Cooke here, do not make myself ridiculous by absurd eccentricities, and the adoption of the nonsensical doctrines of Pythagoras, so utterly at variance with reason and Christian truth. You know, my dear Cooke, I could have cured you of your rheumatism had you possessed common-sense; but who could cure any man who guards his person against the elements by such a ludicrous and unsubstantial dress as yours?"

"I am in torture, replied Cooke; "I was tempted to dance with a pretty woman, and now I am suffering for it."

"As for me," exclaimed Topertoe, "I am a match, and more than a match, for you in suffering. O, this accursed gout!"

"I suppose you brought it on by hard drinking, sir," said the stranger. "If that be so, I shall not undertake to cure you unless you give up hard drinking."

"I will do anything," replied Topertoe, "provided you can allay my pain. I also was tempted to dance as well as the philosopher; and now the Christian parson and the pagan Pythagorean are both suffering for it."

"What is all this about?" exclaimed Manifold. "O Lord! is he going to put them on a vegetable diet, relieved by toast and water—toast and water?"

The stranger paid but little attention to Manifold, because he saw by his face and the number of his chins that he was past hope; but turning towards Topertoe and the Pythagorean, he requested them both to sit beside each other before him. He then asked Topertoe where his gout affected him, and having been informed that it was principally in his great toe and right foot, he deliberately stripped the foot, and having pressed his hands upon it for about the space of ten minutes, he desired his patient to rise up and walk. This he did, and to his utter astonishment, without the slightest symptom or sensation of pain.

"Why, bless my soul!" exclaimed the parson, "I am cured; the pain is altogether gone. Let me have a bumper of claret."

"That will do," observed the stranger. "You are incurable. You will plunge once more into a life of intemperance and luxury, and once more your complaint, from which you are now free, will return to you. You will not deny yourself the gratification of your irrational and senseless indulgences, and yet you expect

to be cured. As for me, I can only remove the malady of such persons as you for the present, or time being; but, so long as you return to the exciting causes of it, no earthly skill or power in man can effect a permanent cure. Now, Cooke, I will relieve you of your rheumatism; but unless you exchange this flimsy stuff for apparel suited to your climate and condition, I feel that I am incapable of rendering you any thing but a temporary relief."

He passed his hands over those parts of his limbs most affected by his complaint, and in a short time he (the philosopher) found himself completely free from his pains.

During those two most extraordinary processes Woodward looked on with a degree of wonder and of interest that might be truly termed intense. What the operations which took place before him could mean he knew not, but when the stranger turned round to the friar and said, —"Now bring me to this unhappy girl," Woodward seized his hat, feeling a presentiment that he was going to the relief of Alice Goodwin, and with hasty steps proceeded to the farm house in which she and her parents lodged. He was now desperate, and resolved, if courtesy failed, to force one more annihilating glance upon her before the mysterious stranger should arrive. We need scarcely inform our readers that he was indignantly repulsed by the family; but he was furious, and in spite of all opposition forced his way into her bedroom, to which he was led by her groans—dying groans they were considered by all around her. He rushed into her bedroom, and fixed his eye upon her with something like the fury of hell in it. The poor girl on seeing him

a second time fell back and moaned as if she had expired. The villain stood looking over her in a spirit of the most malignant triumph.

"It is done now," said he; "there she lies—a corpse—and I am now master of my twelve hundred a year."

He had scarcely uttered the words when he felt a powerful hand grasp him by the shoulder, and send him with dreadful violence to the other side of the room. On turning round to see who the person was who had actually twirled him about like an infant, he found the large, but benevolent-looking stranger standing at Alice's bedside, his finger upon the pulse and his eyes intently fixed upon her apparently lifeless features. He then turned round to Woodward, and exclaimed in a voice of thunder,—

"She is *not* dead, villain, and will not die on this occasion: begone, and leave the room."

"Villain!" replied Woodward, putting his hand to his sword; "I allow no man to call me villain unpunished."

The stranger contemptuously and indignantly waved his hand to him, as much as to say—presently, presently, but not now. The truth is, the loud tones of his voice had caused Alice to open her eyes, and instead of finding the dreaded being before her, there stood the symbol of benevolençe and moral power, with his mild, but clear and benignant eye smiling upon her.

"My dear child," said he, "look upon me and give me your hands. You shall, with the assistance of that God who has so mysteriously gifted me, soon be well, and free from the evil and diabolical influence which

has been for such selfish and accursed purposes exercised over you."

He then took her beautiful but emaciated hands into his own, which were also soft and beautiful, and keeping his eyes fixed upon hers, he then, with that necessary freedom which physicians exercise with their patients, pressed his hands after a time upon her temples, her head, her eyes, and her heart, the whole family being present, servants and all. The effect was miraculous. In the course of twenty minutes the girl was recovered; her spirits — her health had returned to her. Her eyes smiled as she turned them with delight upon her father and mother.

"O, papa!" she exclaimed, smiling, "O, dear mamma, what can this mean? I am cured, and what is more, I am no longer afraid of that vile, bad man. May the God of heaven be praised for this! but how will we thank—how can we thank the benevolent gentleman who has rescued me from death?"

"More thanks are due," replied the stranger, smiling, "to Father Mulrenin here, who acquainted me in a letter, not only with your melancholy condition, but with the supposed cause of it. However, let your thanks be first returned to God, whose mysterious instrument I only am. Now, sir," said he, turning to Woodward, "you laid your hand upon your sword. I also wear a sword, not for aggression but defence. You know we met before. I was not then aware of your personal history, but I am now. I have just returned from London, where I was at the court of his Majesty Charles the Second. While in London I met your granduncle, and from him I learned your history, and

a bad one it is. Now, sir, I beg to inform you that your malignant and diabolical influence over the person of this young lady has ceased forever. As to the future, she is free from that influence; but if I ever hear that you attempt to intrude yourself into her presence, or to annoy her family, I will have you secured in the jail of Waterford in forty-eight hours afterwards, for other crimes that render you liable to the law."

"And pray who are you?" asked Woodward, with a blank and crestfallen countenance, but still with a strong feeling of enmity and bitterness—a feeling which he could not repress. "Who are you who presume to dictate to me upon my conduct and course of life?"

"Who am I?" replied the stranger, assuming an air of incredible dignity. "Sir, my name is VALENTINE GREATRAKES, a person on whom God has bestowed powers which, apart from inspiration, have seldom for centuries ever been vouchsafed to man."

Woodward got pale again. He had heard of his extraordinary powers of curing almost every description of malady peculiar to the human frame, and without another word slunk out of the room. On hearing his name Mr. and Mrs. Goodwin rushed to him, seized his hands, and with the enthusiasm of grateful hearts each absolutely wept upon his broad and ample bosom. He was at this period about forty-six; but seeing Alice's face lit up with joy and delight, he stooped down and kissed her as a father would a daughter who had recovered from the death struggle. "My dear child," he said, "you are now saved; but you must remain

here for some time longer, because I do not wish to part with you until I shall have completely confirmed the sanative influence with which God has enabled me to reinvigorate you and others. As for your selfish persecutor, he will trouble you no more. He knows now what the consequences would be should he attempt it."

CHAPTER XXII.

HISTORY OF THE BLACK SPECTRE.

WOODWARD returned to the public room, where he was soon followed by Father Mulrenin and Greatrakes, who were shortly joined by Mr. Goodwin; Mrs. Goodwin having remained at home with Alice. The dancing went on with great animation, and when the hour of supper arrived there was a full and merry table. The friar was in great glee, but from time to time kept his eye closely fixed upon Woodward, whose countenance and conduct he watched closely. It might have been about the hour of midnight, if not later, when, after a short lull in the conversation, Father Mulrenin addressed Mr. Goodwin as follows: —

"Mr. Goodwin, is there not a family in your neighborhood named Lindsay?"

"There is," replied Goodwin; "and a very respectable family, too."

"By the way, there is a very curious tradition, or legend, connected with the family of Mr. Lindsay's wife: have you ever heard of it?"

"That such a tradition, or legend, exists, I believe," he replied, "but there are many versions of it—although I have never heard any of them distinctly; something I did hear about what is termed the *Shandhinne-dhuv*, or *the Black Spectre*."

"Well, then," proceeded the friar, "if the company has no objection to hear an authentic account of this fearful apparition, I will indulge them with a slight sketch of the narrative:

"When Essex was over here in the Elizabethan wars—and a nice hand he made of them; not, God knows, that we ought to regret it, but I like a good general whether he is for us or against us—devil a doubt of that: well, when Essex was over here conducting them (with reverence be it spoken) it so happened that he had a scoundrel with him by name Hamilton—and a thorough scoundrel was he. O Lord! if I had livedin those days, and wasn't in Orders to tie my hands up—but no matter; this same scoundrel was one of the handsomest vagabones in the English camp. Well and good; but, indeed, to tell God's truth, it was neither well nor good, because, as I said, the man was a first-rate, tiptop scoundrel; but you will find that he was a devilish sight more so before I have put a period to my little narration. Mr. Woodward, will you hob or nob? I think your name is Woodward?"

"With great pleasure, sir," replied Woodward; "and you are right, my name is Woodward; but proceed with your narrative, for, I assure you, I feel very much interested in it, especially in that portion of it which relates to the *Black Spectre*. Though not a believer

in supernatural appearances, I feel much gratification in listening to accounts of them. Pray proceed, sir."

"Well, sir, it so happened that this Hamilton, who had been originally a Scotch Redshank, became privately acquainted with a beautiful and wealthy orphan girl, a relation of the O'Neils; and it so happened again, that whether they made a throw on the dice for it or not, he *won* her affections. So far, however, there was nothing very particularly obnoxious in it, because we know that intermarriages between Catholics and Protestants may disarm the parties of their religious prejudices against each other; and although I cannot affirm the truth of what I am about to say from my own experience, still, I think I have been able to smell out the fact that little Cupid is of no particular religion, and can be claimed by no particular church; or rather I should say that he is claimed by all churches and all creeds. This Hamilton, as I said, was exceedingly handsome, but it seems from the tradition that it was by the beauty of his eyes that Eva O'Neil was conquered, just as the first Eve was by the eyes and tongue of the serpent. Not, God knows, that the great Eve was any great shakes, for she left the world in a nice plight by falling in love with a serpent; but upon my credit she was not the first woman, excuse the blunder, who fell in love with a serpent, and suffered accordingly. I appale to Pythagoras there."

"It is an allegory," replied the Pythagorean, "and simply means that we are innocent so long as we are young, and that when we come to maturity we are corrupted and depraved by our passions."

"How the sorra can you say that," replied the friar,

"when you know that Adam and Eve were created full-grown?"

"Pray go on with your tradition," said Greatrakes, "and let us hear the history of the *Black Spectre.* I am not myself an infidel in the history of supernatural appearances, and I wish to hear you out."

"Well, then," replied the friar, "you shall. The villain proposed marriage to this beautiful young orphan, and as he was a handsome vagabone, as I have stated, he was accepted; but his eyes, above all things, were irresistible. They were married by a Protestant clergyman, and immediately afterwards by a Catholic priest, who was far advanced in years. The lady would submit to no marriage but a legal one. The marriage, however, was private; for Hamilton knew that Essex was aware of his having been during this event a married man, and that his wife, who was a distant relation of the Earl's, was still living. The marriage, however, came to Essex's ears, and Hamilton was called to account. He denied the marriage, the old priest having been now dead, and none but the Protestant clergyman of the parish being alive to bear testimony to the fact of the marriage. He endeavored to prevail upon the clergyman also to deny the marriage, which he refused to do, whereupon he was found murdered. His wife by this marriage having learned from Essex that Hamilton had most treacherously deceived her, fell into premature labor and died; but her last words were an awful curse upon him, and his children after him, to the last generation.

"'May the Eye that lured me to destruction,' she said, 'become a curse to you and your descendants for-

ever! May it blight and kill all those whom it looks upon, and render it dreadful and dreaded to all those who will place confidence in you or your descendants!'

"God knows I couldn't much blame her; it was her last Christian benediction to the villain who had destroyed her, and, setting charity aside, I don't see how she could have spoken otherwise.

"When the proofs of the marriage, however, were about to be brought against him, the Protestant clergyman, who, on discovering his iniquity, was too honest to conceal it, and who felt bitterly the fraud that had been practised on him, was found murdered, as I have said, because he was now the only evidence left against Hamilton's crime. The latter did not, however, get rid of him by that atrocious and inhuman act. The spirit of that man haunts the family from that day to this; it is always a messenger of evil to them whenever he appears, and it matters not where they go or where they live, he is sure to follow them, and to fasten upon some of the family, generally the wickedest, of course, as his victim. Now, Mr. Woodward, what do you think of that family tradition?"

"I think of it," replied Woodward, "with contempt, as I do of everything that proceeds from the lips of an ignorant and illiterate Roman Catholic priest."

"Sir," replied the friar, "I am not the inventor of this family tradition, nor of the crime which is said—however justly I know not—to have given rise to it; but this I do know, that no man having claims to the character of a gentleman would use such language to a defenceless man as you have just used to me. The

legend is traditionary in your family, and I have only given it as I have heard it. If I were not a clergyman I would chastise you for your insolence; but my hands are bound up, and you well know it."

"Friar," said Greatrakes, "when you know that your hands are bound up, you should have avoided insulting any man. You should not have related a piece of family history—perhaps false from beginning to end—in the presence of a gentleman so intimately connected with that family as you knew him to be. It was no topic for a common room like this, and it was quite unjustifiable in you to have introduced it."

"I feel, sir, that you are perfectly right," replied the good-natured friar, "and I ask Mr. Woodward's pardon for having, without the slightest intention of offence to him, done so. You will recollect that he himself expressed an anxiety to hear it."

"All I say upon the subject," observed the Pythagorean, "is simply this, that Pythagoras himself could not have cured me of the rheumatism as my friend Valentine Greatrakes has done."

"You will require no cure, and, what is better, no necessity for cure," replied Greatrakes, smiling, "if you will have only common sense, my dear Cooke. Clothe yourself in warm and comfortable garments, and feed your miserable carcass with good beef and mutton, and, in addition to which, like myself and the friar here, take a warm tumbler of good usquebaugh punch to promote digestion."

"I will never abandon my principles," replied the philosopher. "Linen and vegetable diet forever."

Manifold was asleep after his gorge,—a sleep from

which he never awoke,—but Doctor Doolittle, anxious to secure Cooke as a patient, became quite eloquent upon the advantages of a vegetable diet, and of the Pythagorean system in general; after which the conversation of the night closed, and the guests departed to their respective lodgings.

The night was still and beautiful. The moon was about to sink, but still she emitted that faint and shadowy light which lends such calm, but picturesque beauty to the nocturnal landscape. Woodward was alone; but it would be difficult to find language in which to describe the bitterness of his feelings and the frightful sense of his disappointment on finding, not only that his infamous design upon the life of Alice Goodwin had been frustrated, but on feeling certain that she had been restored to perfect health before his eyes. This, however, was not the worst of it. He had calculated on killing her, and consequently of securing the twelve hundred a year, on the strength of which he and his mother could confidently negotiate with the old nobleman, who always slept with one eye open. In the venom and dark malignity of his heart he cursed Alice Goodwin, he cursed Valentine Greatrakes, he cursed the world, and he cursed God, or rather would have cursed him had he believed in the existence of such a being.

In this mood of mind he was proceeding to his lodgings, when he espied before him the *Shan-dhinne-dhuv*, or *Black Spectre*, with the middogue in his hand. He stood and looked at it steadily.

"What is this?" said he, addressing the figure before him. "What pranks are you playing now? Do you

think me a fool? What brought you here? and what do you mean by this pantomimic nonsense, Mr. Conjurer?"

The figure, of course, made no reply, except by gesture. It brandished the middogue, or dagger, however, and pointed it three times at his heart. The spot upon which this strange interview occurred was perfectly clear of anything that could conceal an individual. In fact, it was an open common. Woodward, consequently, led astray by circumstances with which the reader will become subsequently acquainted, started forward with the intention of reaching the individual whom he suspected of indulging himself in playing with his fears, or rather with jocularly intending to excite them. He sprang forward, we say, and reached the spot on which the *Black Spectre* had stood, but our readers may judge of his surprise when he found that the spectre, or whatever it was, had disappeared, and was nowhere, or any longer, visible. Place of concealment there was none. He examined the ground about him. It was firm and compact, and without a fissure in which a rat could conceal itself.

There is no power in human nature which enables the heart of man, under similar circumstances, to bear the occurrence of such a scene as we have described, unmoved. The man was hardened—an infidel, an atheist; but, nothwithstanding all this, a sense of awe, wonder, and even, in some degree, of terror, came over his heart, which nearly unnerved him. Most atheists, however, are utter profligates, as he was; or silly philosophers, who, because they take their own reason for their guide, will come to no other conclusion than that to which it leads them.

"It is simply a hallucination," said he to himself, "and merely the result of having heard the absurd nonsense of what that ignorant and credulous old friar related to-night concerning my family. Still it is strange, because I am cool and sober, and in the perfect use of my senses. This is the same appearance which I saw before near the Haunted House, and of which I never could get any account. What if there should be——?"

He checked himself and proceeded to his lodgings, with an intention of returning home the next morning; which he did, after having failed in the murderous mission which he undertook to accomplish.

"Mother," said he, after his return home, "all is lost: Alice Goodwin has been restored to perfect health by Valentine Greatrakes, and my twelve hundred a year is gone forever. How can we enter into negotiations with that sharp old scoundrel, Lord Cockletown, now? I assure you I had her at the last gasp, when Greatrakes came in and restored her to perfect health before my face. But, setting that aside for the present, is there such a being as what is termed the *Black Spectre*, mysteriously connected, if I may say so, with our family?"

His mother's face got pale as death.

"Why do you ask, Harry?" said she.

"Because," he replied, "I have reason to think that I have seen it twice."

"Alas! alas!" she exclaimed, "then the doom of the curse is upon *you*. It selects only one of every generation on which to work its vengeance. The third appearance of it will be fatal to you."

"This is all contemptible absurdity, my dear mother. I don't care if I saw it a thousand times. How can it interfere with my fate?"

"It does not interfere," she replied, "it only intimates it, and whatever the nature of the individual's death among our family may be, it shadows it out. What signs did it make to you?"

"It brandished what is called in this country a middogue, or Irish dagger, at my heart."

His mother got pale again.

"Harry," said she, "I would recommend you to leave the kingdom. Avoid the third warning."

"Mother," he replied, "this certainly is sad nonsense. I have no notion of leaving the kingdom in consequence of such superstitious stuff as this; all these things are soap bubbles; put your finger on them and they dissolve into nothing. How is Charles? for I have not yet seen him."

"Improving very much, although not able yet to leave his room."

Woodward walked about and seemed absorbed in thought.

"It is a painful thing, mother," said he, "that Charles is so long recovering. Do you know that I am half inclined to think he will never recover? His wound was a dreadful one, and its consequences on his constitution will, I fear, be fatal."

"I hope not, Harry," she replied, "for ever since his illness I have found that my heart gathers about him with an affection that I have never felt for him before."

"Your resolution, then, is fixed, I suppose, to leave him your property?"

"It is fixed; there is, or can be, no doubt about it Once I come to a determination I am immovable. We shall be able to wheedle Lord Cockletown and his niece."

Harry paused a moment, then passed out of the room, and retired to his own apartment.

Here he remained for hours. At the close of the evening he appeared in the withdrawing-room, but still in a silent and gloomy state.

The perfect cure of Miss Goodwin had spread like wildfire, and reached the whole country.

Greatrake's reputation was then at its highest, and the number of his cures was the theme of all conversation. Barney Casey had well marked Woodward since his return from Ballyspellan, and having heard, in connection with others, that Miss Goodwin had been cured by Greatrakes, he resolved to keep his eye upon him, and, indeed, as the event will prove, it was well he did so.

That night, about the hour of twelve o'clock, Barney, who had suspected that he (Woodward) had either murdered Grace Davoren in order to conceal his own guilt, or kept her in some secret place for the most unjustifiable purposes, remarked that, as was generally usual with him, he did not go to bed at the period peculiar to the habits of the family.

"There is something on my mind this night," said Barney; "I can't tell what it is; but I think he is bent on some villanous scheme that ought to be watched, and in the name of God I will watch him."

Woodward went out of the house more stealthily than usual, and took his way towards the town of Rathfillan

A good way in the distance behind him might be discovered another figure dogging his footsteps, that figure being no other than the honest figure of Barney Casey. On went Woodward unsuspicious that he was watched, until he reached the indescribable cabin of Sol Donnel, the old herbalist. The night had become dark, and Barney was able, without being seen, to come near enough to Woodward to hear his words and observe his actions. He tapped at the old man's window, which, after some delay and a good deal of grumbling, was at length opened to him. The hut consisted of only one room—a fact which Barney well knew.

"Who is there?" said the old herbalist. "Why do you come at this hour to deprive me of my rest? Nobody comes for any good purpose at such an hour as this."

"Open your door, you hypocritical old sinner, and I will speak to you. Open your door instantly."

"Wait, then; I will open it; to be sure I will open it; because I know whoever you are that if there was not something extraordinary in it, it isn't at this hour you'd be coming to me."

"Open the door I say, and then I shall speak to you."

The window, which the old herbalist had opened, and, in the hurry of the moment, left unshut, remained unshut, and Barney, after Woodward had entered, stood close to it in order to hear the conversation which might pass between them.

"Now," said Woodward, after he had entered the hut, "I want a dose from you. One of my dogs, I fear, is seized with incipient symptoms of hydrophobia, and I wish to dose him to death."

"And what hour is this to come for such a purpose?" asked Sol Donnel. "It isn't at midnight that a man comes to me to ask for a dose of poison for a dog."

"You are very right in that," replied Woodward; "but the truth is, that I had an assignation with a girl in the town, and I thought that I might as well call upon you now as at any other time."

The eye of the old sinner glistened, for he knew perfectly well that the malady of the dog was a fable.

"Well," said he, "I can give you the dose, but what's to be the recompense?"

"What do you ask?" replied the other.

"I will dose nothing under five pounds."

"Are you certain that your dose will be sure to effect its purpose?" asked Woodward.

"As sure as I am of life," replied the old sinner; "one glass of it would settle a man as soon as it would a dog;" and as he spoke he fastened his keen, glittering eyes upon Woodward. The glance seemed to say, I understand you, and I know that the dog you are about to give the dose to walks upon two legs instead of four.

"Now," said Woodward, after having secured the bottle, "here are your five pounds, and *mark me*——" he looked sternly in the face of the herbalist, but added not another word.

The herbalist, having secured the money and deposited it in his pocket, said, with a malicious grin,—

"Couldn't you, Mr. Woodward, have prevented yourself from going to the expense of five pounds for poisoning a dog, that you could have shot without all this expense?"

Woodward looked at him. "Your life," said he, 'will not be worth a day's purchase if you breathe a syllable of what took place between us this night. Sol Donnel, I am a desperate man, otherwise I would not have come to you. Keep the secret between us, for, if you divulge it, you may take my word for it that you will not survive it twenty-four hours. Now, be warned, for I am both resolute and serious."

The herbalist felt the energy of his language and was subdued.

"No," he replied, "I shall never breathe it; kill your dog in your own way; all I can say is, that half a glass of it would kill the strongest horse in your stable; only let me remark that I gave you the bottle to kill *a dog*."

"Now," thought Barney Casey, "what can all this mean? There is none of the dogs wrong. He is at some devil's work; but what it is I do not know; I shall watch him well, however, and it will go hard or I shall find out his purpose."

As Woodward was about to depart he mused for a time, and at length addressed the herbalist.

"Suppose," said he, "that I wish to kill this dog by slow degrees, would it not be a good plan to give him a little of it every day, and let him die, as it were, by inches?"

"That my bed may be made in heaven but it is a good thought, and by far the safest plan," replied the herbalist, "and the very one I would recommend you. A small spoonful every day put into his coffee or her coffee, as the case may be, will, in the course of a fortnight or three weeks, make a complete cure."

"Why, you old scoundrel, who ever heard of a dog drinking coffee?"

"I did," replied the old villain, with another grin, "and many a time it is newly sweetened for them, too, and they take it until they fall asleep; but they forget to waken somehow. Taste that yourself, and you'll find that it is beautifully sweetened; because if it was given to the dog in its natural bitter state he might refuse to take it at all, or, what would be worse and more dangerous still, he might suspect the reason why it was given to him."

The two persons looked each other in the face, and it would, indeed, be difficult to witness such an expression as the countenance of each betrayed. That of the herbalist lay principally in his ferret eyes. It was cruel, selfish, cunning, and avaricious. The eye of the other was dark, significant, vindictive, and terrible. In his handsome features there was, when contrasted with those of the herbalist, a demoniacal elevation, a satanic intellectuality of expression, which rendered the contrast striking beyond belief. The one appeared with the power of Apollyon, the god of destruction, conscious of that power; the other as his mere contemptible agent of evil—subordinate, low, villanous, and wicked.

Woodward, after a significant look, bade him good night, and took his way home.

Barney Casey, however, still dogged him stealthily, because he knew not whether the dose was intended for Grace Davoren or his brother Charles. Mrs. Lindsay had made no secret of her intention to leave her property to the latter, whose danger, and the state

of whose health, had awakened all those affections of the mother which had lain dormant in her heart so long. The revivification of her affections for him was one of those capricious manifestations of feeling which can emanate from no other source but the heart of a mother. Independently of this, there was in the mind of Mrs. Lindsay a principle of conscious guilt, of hardness of heart, of all want of common humanity, that sometimes startled her into terror. She knew the villany of her son Woodward, and, after all, the heart of a woman and a mother is not like the heart of a man. There is a tendency to recuperation in a woman's and a mother's heart, which can be found nowhere else; and the contrast which she felt herself forced to institute between the generous character of her son Charles and the villany of Woodward broke down the hard propensities of her spirit, and subdued her very wickedness into something like humanity. Virtue and goodness, after all, will work their way, especially where a mother's feelings, conscious of the evil and conscious of the good, are forced to strike the balance between them. This consideration it was which determined Mrs. Lindsay, in addition to other considerations already alluded to, to come to the resolution of leaving her property to her son Charles. There is, besides, a want of confidence and of mutual affection in villany which reacts upon the heart, precisely as it did upon that of Mrs. Lindsay. She knew that her eldest son was in intention a murderer; and there is a terrible summons in conscience which sometimes awakens the soul into a sense of virtue and truth.

Be this as it may, Barney Casey's vigilance was ineffectual. From the night on which Woodward got the bottle from the herbalist, Charles Lindsay began gradually and slowly to decline. Barney's situation in the family was that of a general servant, in fact, a man of all work, and the necessary consequence was, that he could not contravene the conduct of Harry Woodward, although he saw clearly that, notwithstanding Charles's wound was nearly healed, his general health was getting worse.

Now, the benevolence and singular power of Valentine Greatrakes are historical facts which cannot be contradicted. After about a month from the time he cured Alice Goodwin he came to the town of Rathfillan, with several objects in view, one of which was to see Alice Goodwin, and to ascertain that her health was perfectly reëstablished. But the other and greater one was that which we shall describe. Mr. Lindsay, having perceived that his son Charles's health was gradually becoming worse, though his wound was healed, and on finding that the physician who attended him could neither do anything for his malady, nor even account for it, or pronounce a diagnosis upon its character, bethought him of the man who had so completely cured Alice Goodwin. Accordingly, on Greatrakes's visit to Rathfillan, he waited upon him, and requested, as a personal favor, that he would come and see his dying son, for indeed Charles at that time was apparently not many days from death. This distinguished and wealthy gentleman at once assented, and told Mr. Lindsay that he would visit his son the next day.

"I may not cure him," said he, "because there are certain complaints which cannot be cured. Such complaints I never attempt to cure; and even in others that *are* curable I sometimes fail. But wherever there is a possibility of cure I rarely fail. I am not proud of this gift; on the contrary, it has subdued my heart into a sense of piety and gratitude to God, who, in his mercy, has been pleased to make me the instrument of so much good to my fellow-creatures."

Mr. Lindsay returned home to his family in high spirits, and on his way to the house observed his step-son Woodward and Barney Casey at the door of the dog-kennel.

"I maintain the dog is wrong," said Woodward, "and to me it seems an incipient case of hydrophobia."

"And to me," replied Barney, "it appears that his complaint is hunger, and that you have simply deprived him of his necessary food."

At this moment Mr. Lindsay approached them, and exclaimed,—

"Harry, let your honest and affectionate heart cheer up. Valentine Greatrakes will be here to-morrow, and will cure Charles, as he cured Alice Goodwin, and then we will have them married; for if he recovers I am determined on it, and will abide no opposition from any quarter. Indeed, Harry, your mother is now willing that they should be married, and is sorry that she ever opposed it. Your mother, thank God, is a changed woman, and thank God the change is one that makes my very heart rejoice."

"God be praised," exclaimed Barney, "that *is* good

news, and makes my heart rejoice nearly as much as yours."

"Father," said Woodward, "you have taken a heavy load off my mind. Charles is certainly very ill, and until Greatrakes comes I shall make it a point to watch and nurse-tend him myself."

"It is just what I would expect from your kind and affectionate heart, Harry," replied Lindsay, rather slowly though, who then passed into the house to communicate the gratifying intelligence to his wife and daughter.

The intensity of Woodward's malignity and villany was such that, as we have mentioned before, on some occasions he forgot himself into such a state of mind, and, what was worse, into such an expression of countenance, as, especially to Barney Casey, who so deeply suspected him, challenged observation. After Linsday had gone he put his hand to his chin, and said, still with caution,—

"Yes, poor fellow, I will watch him myself this night; for if he happened to die before Greatrakes comes to-morrow, what an affliction would it not be to the family, and especially to myself, who love him so well. Yes, in order to sustain and support him, I will watch him and act as his nurse this night."

There was, however, such an expression on his countenance as could not be mistaken even by a common observer, much less by such an acute one as Barney Casey, who had his eye upon him for such a length of time! His countenance, Barney saw plainly, was as dark as hell, and seemed to catch its inspiration from that damnable region.

"Barney," said he, "I shall watch the sick bed, and nurse my brother Charles to-night, in order, if possible, to sustain him until Greatrakes cures him to-morrow."

"Ah, it's you that is the affectionate brother," replied Barney, who had read deliberate murder in his countenance. "But," he exclaimed, after Woodward had gone, "if you watch *him* this night I will watch *you.* You know now that he stands between you and your mother's property, and you will put him out of the way if you can. Yes, I will watch you well *this* night."

The minute poisoned doses which he had contrived to administer to his brother were always followed by an excessive thirst. Now, Barney had, as we have often said, strong suspicions; but on this occasion he was determined to place himself in a position from which he could watch every movement of Woodward without being suspected himself. His usual sleeping place was in a low gallery below stairs; but it so happened that there was a closet beside Charles's bed in which there was neither bed nor furniture of any kind, with the exception of a single chair. The door between them had, as is usual, two panes of glass in it, through which any person in the dark could see what happened in the room in which Charles slept.

Barney locked the door on the inside, and it was well that he did so, for in a short time Woodward came in, with a guilty and a stealthy pace, and having looked, like a murderer, about the room, he approached the closet door and tried to open it; but finding that it was locked his apprehensions vanished, and he delib-

erately, on seeing that his brother was asleep, took a bottle out of his pocket, and having poured about a wine-glassful of the poison into the small jug which contained the usual drink of the patient, he left the room, satisfied that, as soon as his brother awoke, he would take the deadly draught. When he departed, Barney came out, and having substituted another for it—for there was a variety of potions on the sick table—he, too, stealthily descended the stairs, and going to the dog-kennel deliberately administered the pernicious draught to the dog which Woodward had insisted was unwell. He happily escaped all observation, and accomplished his plan without either notice or suspicion. He stayed in the kennel in order to watch the effects of the potion upon the dog, who died in the course of about fifteen minutes after having received it.

"Now," said Barney, "I think I have my thumb upon him, and it will go hard with me or I will make him suffer for this hellish intention to murder his brother. Mr. Greatrakes is a man of great wealth and high rank; he is, besides, a magistrate of the county, and, please God, I will disclose to him all that I have seen and suspect."

Barney, under the influence of these feelings, went to bed, satisfied that he had saved the life of Charles Lindsay, at least for that night, but at the same time resolved to bring his murderous brother to an account for his conduct.

CHAPTER XXIII.

GREATRAKES AT WORK.—DENOUEMENT.

GREATRAKES was on his way from Birch Grove to Rathfillan House the next day when he was met by Barney Casey, who had been on the lookout for him. Barney, who knew not his person, was not capable of determining whether he was the individual whom he wanted or not. At all events he resolved at once to ascertain that fact. Accordingly, putting his hand to his hat, he said, with a respectful manner,—

"Pray, sir, are you the great Valentine Great Rooke, who prevents the people from dyin'?"

"I am Valentine Greatrakes," he replied, with a smile; "but I cannot prevent the people from dying."

"Begad, but you can prevent them from being sick, at any rate. I am myself sometimes subject to a colic, bad luck to it—(this was a lie, got up for the purpose of arresting the attention of Greatrakes)—and maybe if you would be kind enough to rub me down you would drive the wind out of me and cure me of it, for at least, by all accounts through the whole parish, it's a windy colic that haunts me."

Greatrakes, who was a man of great good-nature, and strongly susceptible of humor, laughed very heartily at Barney's account of his miserable state of health.

"Well," said he, "my good friend, let me tell you that the colic you speak of is one of the most healthy diseases we have. Don't, if you regard your constitution and your health, ever attempt to get rid of it. Your constitution is a windy constitution, and that is the reason why you are graciously afflicted with a windy colic."

It was, in fact, diamond cut diamond between the two. Barney, who had never had a colic in his life, shrugged his shoulders very dolefully at the miserable character of the sympathy which was expressed for him; and Greatrakes, from his great powers of observation, saw that every word Barney uttered with respect to his besetting malady was a lie.

At length Barney's countenance assumed an expression of such honest sincerity and feeling that Greatrakes was at once struck by it, and he kept his eye steadily fixed upon him.

"Sir," said Barney, "I understand you are a distinguished gentleman and a magistrate besides?"

"I am certainly a magistrate," replied Greatrakes; "but what is your object in asking the question, my good fellow?"

"I understand you are going to cure Masther Charles Lindsay. Now, I wish to give you a hint or two concerning him. His brother — he of the Evil Eye — according to my most solemn and serious opinion, is poisoning him by degrees. I think he has been dosing him upon a small scale, so as to make him die off by the effects of poison, without any suspicion being raised against himself; but when his father told him yesterday that you were to come this day to cure him, his

brother insisted that he should sit up with him, and nurse-tend him himself. I was aware of this, and from a conversation I heard him have with an old herbalist, named Sol Donnel, I had suspicions of his design against his brother's life. He strove to kill Miss Goodwin by the damnable force and power of his Evil Eye, and would have done so had not you cured her."

"And are you sure," replied Greatrakes, "that it is not his Evil Eye that is killing his brother?"

"I don't know that," replied Barney; "perhaps it may be so."

"No," replied Greatrakes, "from all I have read and heard of its influence it cannot act upon persons within a certain degree of consanguinity."

"I would take my oath," said honest Barney, "that it is the poison that acts in this instance."

He then gave him a description of Woodward's having poured the poison—or at least what he suspected to be such—into the drink which was usually left at the bedside of his brother, and of its effect upon the dog.

Greatrakes, on hearing this, drew up his horse, and looking Barney sternly in the face, asked him, —

"Pray, my good fellow, did Mr. Woodward ever injure or offend you?"

"No, sir," replied Barney, "never in any instance; but what I say I say from my love for his brother, whose life, I can swear, he is tampering with. It is a weak word, I know, but I will use a stronger, for I say he is bent upon his murder by poison."

"Well," said Greatrakes, "keep your counsel for the present. I will study this matter, and examine into it; and I shall most certainly receive your infor-

nations against him; but I must have better opportunities of making myself acquainted with the facts. In the meantime, keep your own secret, and leave the rest to me."

When Greatrakes reached Rathfillan House the whole family attended him to the sick bed of Charles. Woodward was there, and appeared to feel a deep interest in the fate of his brother. Greatrakes, on looking at him, said, before he applied the sanative power which God had placed in his constitution,—

"This young man is dying of a slow and subtle poison, which some person under the roof of this house has been administering to him in small doses."

As he uttered these words he fixed his eyes upon Woodward, whose face quailed and blanched under the power and significance of his gaze.

"Sir," replied Lindsay, "with the greatest respect for you, there is not a single individual under this roof who would injure him. He is beloved by every one. The sympathy felt for him through the whole parish is wonderful—but by none more than by his brother Woodward."

This explanation, however, came too late. Greatrakes's impressions were unchanged.

"I think I will cure him," he proceeded; "but after his recovery let him be cautious in taking any drink unless from the hands of his mother or his father."

He then placed his hands over his face and chest, which he kept rubbing for at least a quarter of an hour, when, to their utter astonishment, Charles pronounced himself in as good health as he had ever enjoyed in his life.

"This, sir," said he, "is wonderful; why, I am perfectly restored to health. As I live, this man must have the power of God about him to be able to effect such an extraordinary cure; and he has also cured my darling Alice. What can I say? Father, give him a hundred—five hundred pounds."

Greatrakes smiled.

"You don't know, it seems," he replied, "that I do not receive remuneration for any cures I may effect. I am wealthy and independent, and I fear that if I were to make the wonderful gift which God has bestowed on me the object of mercenary gain, it might be withdrawn from me altogether. My principle is one of humanity and benevolence. I will remain in Rathfillan for a fortnight, and shall see you again," he added, addressing himself to Charles. "Now," he proceeded, "mark me, you will require neither drinks nor medicine of any description. Whatever drinks you take, take them at the common table of the family. There are circumstances connected with your case which, as a magistrate of the county, I am resolved to investigate."

He looked sternly at Woodward as he uttered the last words, and then took his departure to Rathfillan, having first told Barney Casey to call on him the next day.

After Greatrakes had gone, Woodward repaired to the room of his mother, in a state of agitation which we cannot describe.

"Mother," said he, "unless we can manage that old peer and his niece, I am a lost man."

"Do not be uneasy," replied his mother; "whilst you were at Ballyspellan I contrived to manage that

Ask me nothing about it; but every arrangement is made, and you are to be married this day week. Keep yourself prepared for a settled case."

What the mother's arguments in behalf of the match may have been, we cannot pretend to say. We believe that Miss Riddle's attachment to his handsome person and gentlemanly manners overcame all objections on the part of her uncle, and nothing now remained to stand in the way of their union.

The next day Barney Casey waited upon Greatrakes, according to appointment, when the following conversation took place between them:—

"Now," said Greatrakes, solemnly, "what is your name?"

As he put the question with a stern and magisterial air, his tablets and pencil in hand, which he did with the intention of awing Barney into a full confession of the exact truth—a precaution which Barney's romance of the windy colic induced him to take,—"I say," he repeated, "what's your name?"

Barney, seeing the pencil and tablets in hand, and besides not being much, or at all, acquainted with magisterial investigations, felt rather blank, and somewhat puzzled at this query.

He accordingly resorted to the usage of the country, and commenced scratching a rather round bullet head.

"My name, your honor," he replied; "my name, couldn't you pass that by, sir?"

"No," said Greatrakes, "I cannot pass it by. In this business it is essential that I should know it."

"Ay," replied Barney, "but maybe you have some

treacherous design in it, and that you are goin' to take the part of the wealthy scoundrel against the poor man; and even if you did, you wouldn't be the first magistrate who did it."

Greatrakes looked keenly at him. The observation he expressed was precisely in accordance with the liberality of his own feelings.

"Don't be alarmed," he added; "if you knew my character, which it is evident you do not, you would know that I never take the part of the rich man against the poor man, unless when there is justice on the part of the wealthy man, and crime, unjustifiable and cruel crime, on the part of the poor man, which, I am sorry to say, is not an unfrequent case. Now, I must insist, as a magistrate, that you give me your name."

"Well, then," replied the other, "I'm one Barney Casey, sir, who lives in Rathfillan House as a servant to Mr. Lindsay, stepfather to that murtherin' blackguard."

Greatrakes then examined him closely, and made him promise to come to Rathfillan that night, in order that he might accompany him to the hut of old Sol Donnel, the herbalist.

"I am resolved," said he, "to investigate this matter, and in my capacity of a magistrate to bring the guilty to justice."

"Faith, sir," replied Barney, "and I'm not the boy who is going to stand in your way in such a business as that. You know that it was I that put you up to it, and any assistance I can give you in it you may reckon on. Although not a magistrate, as you are, maybe I'm

just as fond of justice as yourself. Of coorse I'll attend you to-night, and show you the devil's nest in which Sol Donnel and his blessed babe of a niece, by name Caterine Collins, live."

Greatrakes took down the name of Caterine Collins, and after having arranged the hour at which Barney was to conduct him to Sol Donnel's hut, they separated.

About eleven o'clock that night Barney and Greatrakes reached the miserable-looking residence in which this old viper lived.

"Now," said Greatrakes, addressing the herbalist, "my business with you is this: I have a bitter enemy who wants to establish a claim upon my property, and I wish to put him out of my way. Do you understand me? I am a wealthy man, and can reward you well."

"I never talk of these things in the presence of a third party," replied the herbalist, looking significantly at Barney, whom he well knew.

"Well," replied the other, "I dare say you are right. Casey, go out and leave us to ourselves."

There was a little hall in the house, which hall was in complete obscurity. Barney availed himself of this circumstance, opened the door and clapped it to as if he had gone out, but remained at the same time in the inside.

"No, sir," replied Sol Donnel, ignorant of the trick which Barney had played upon him, "I never allow a third person to be present at any of those conversations about the strength and power of my herbs. Now, tell me, what it is that you want me to do for you."

"Why, to tell you the truth," replied Greatrakes, "I never heard of your name until within a few days ago, that you were mentioned to me by Mr. Henry

Woodward, who told me that you gave him a dose to settle a dog that was laboring under the first symptoms of hydrophobia. Well, the dog is dead by the influence of the bottle you gave him; but now that we are by ourselves I tell you at once that I want a dose for a man who is likely, if he lives, to cut me out of a large property."

"O, *Cheernah!*" exclaimed the old villain, "do you think that I who lives by curin' the poor for nothing, or next to nothing, could lend myself to sich a thing as that?"

"Very well," replied the other, preparing to take his departure, "you have lost fifty pounds by the affair at all events."

"Fifty pounds!" exclaimed the other, whilst his keen and diabolical eyes gleamed with the united spirit of avarice and villany. "Fifty pounds! well how simple and foolish some people are. Why now, if you had a dog, say a setter or a pointer, that from fear of madness you wished to get rid of, and that you had mentioned it to me, I could give you a bottle that would soon settle it; I don't go above a dog or the inferior animals, and no man that has his senses about him ought to ask me to do anything else."

"Well, then, I tell you at once that, as I said, it is *not* for a dog, but for a worse animal, a man, my own cousin, who, unless I absolutely contrive to poison him, will deprive me of six thousand a year. Instead of fifty I shall make the recompense a hundred, after having found that your medicine is successful."

The old villain's eye gleamed again at the prospect of such liberality.

"Well now," said he, "see what it is for a pious man to forget his devotions, even for one day. I forgot to say my *Leadan Wurrah* this mornin', and that is the raison that your temptation has overcome me. You must call then to-morrow night, because I have nothing now, barrin' what 'ud excite the bowels, and it seems that isn't what you want; but if you be down here about this same hour to-morrow night, you shall have what will put your enemy out of the way."

"That will do then," replied Greatrakes, "and I shall depend on you."

"Ay," replied the old villain, "but remember that the act is not mine but your own. I simply furnish you with the necessary means—your own act will be to apply them."

On leaving the hut, Greatrakes was highly gratified on finding that Barney Casey had overheard their whole conversation.

"You will serve as a corroborative evidence," said he.

The herbalist, at all events, was entrapped, and not only his disposition to sell botanical poisons, but his habit of doing so, was clearly proved to the benevolent magistrate.

On the next night he got the poison, and having consulted with Casey, he said he would not urge the matter for a few days, as he wished, in the most private way possible, to procure further evidence against the guilty parties.

In the meantime, every preparation was made in both families for Woodward's wedding. The old peer, who had cross-examined his niece upon the subject, discovered her attachment to Woodward; and as he

wished to see her settled before his death with a gentlemanly and respectable husband—a man who would be capable of taking care of the property which he must necessarily leave her, as she was his favorite and his heiress—and besides, he loved her as a daughter—he was resolved that Woodward and she should be united.

"I don't care a fig," said he, "whether this Woodward has property or not. He is a gentleman, respectably connected, of accomplished manners, handsome in person, and if he has not fortune, why you have; and I think the best thing you can do is to accept him without hesitation. The comical rascal," said he, laughing heartily, "took me in so completely during our first interview, that he became a favorite with me."

"I think well of him," replied his firm-minded niece; "and I even admit that I love him, as far as a girl of such a cold constitution as mine may; but I tell you, uncle, that if I discovered a taint of vice or want of principle in his character, I could fling him off with contempt."

"I wish to heaven," replied the uncle, rather nettled, "that we could have up one of the twelve apostles. I dare say some of them, if they were disposed to marry, might come up to your mark."

"Well, uncle, at all events I like him sufficiently to consent that he should become my husband."

"Well, and is not that enough; bless my heart, could you wish to go beyond it?"

In the meantime, very important matters were proceeding, which bore strongly upon Woodward's destiny. Greatrakes had collected—aided, of course, by Barney

Casey, who was the principal, but not the sole, evidence against him—such a series of facts as, he felt, justified him in receiving informations against him.

At this crisis a discovery was made in connection with the Haunted House, which was privately, through Casey, communicated to Greatrakes, who called a meeting of the neighboring magistrates upon it. This he did by writing to them privately to meet him on a particular day at his little inn in Rathfillan. For obvious reasons, and out of consideration to his feelings, Mr. Lindsay's name was omitted. At all events the night preceding the day of Woodward's marriage with Miss Riddle had arrived, but two circumstances occurred on that evening and on that night which not only frustrated all his designs upon Miss Riddle, or rather upon her uncle's property, but—however, we shall not anticipate.

It was late in the evening when Miss Riddle was told by a servant that a young man, handsome and of fine proportions, wished to see her for a few minutes.

"Not that I would recommend you to see him," said the serving-woman who delivered the message. "He is, to be sure, very handsome; but, then, he is one of those *wild* people, and armed with a great middogue or dagger, and God knows what his object may be—maybe to take your life. As sure as I live he is a tory."

"That may be," replied Miss Riddle; "but I know, by your description of him, that he is the individual to whose generous spirit I and my dear uncle owe our lives: let him be shown in at once to the front parlor."

In a few minutes she entered, and found Shawn before her.

"O Shawn!" said she, "I am glad to see you. My uncle is using all his interest to get you a pardon—that is, provided you are willing to abandon the wild life to which you have taken."

"I am willing to abandon it," he replied; "but I have one task to perform before I leave it. You have heard of the *toir*, or tory-hunt, which was made after me and others; but chiefly after *me*, for I was the object they wanted to shoot down, or rather that *he*, the villain, wanted to murder under the authority of those cruel laws that *make* us tories."

"Who do you mean by *he?*" asked Miss Riddle.

"I mean Harry Woodward," he replied. "He hunted me, disguised by a black mask."

"But are you sure of that, Shawn?"

"I am sure of it," he replied; "and it was not until yesterday that I discovered his villany. I know the barber in Rathfillan where the black mask was got for him, I believe, by his wicked mother."

Miss Riddle, who was a strong-minded girl, paused, and was silent for a time, after which she said,—

"I am glad you told me this, Shawn. I spoke to him in your favor, and he pledged his honor to me previous to the terrible hunt you allude to, and of which the whole country rang, that he would never take a step to your prejudice, but would rather protect you as far as he could, in consequence of your having generously saved my dear uncle's life and mine."

"The deeper villain he, then. He is upon my trail night and day. He ruined Grace Davoren, who has

disappeared, and the belief of the people is that he has murdered her. He possesses the Evil Eye, too, and would by it have murdered Miss Goodwin, of Beech Grove, in order to get back the property which his uncle left her, only for the wonderful power of Squire Greatrakes, who cured her. And, besides, I have raison to know that he will be arrested this very night for attempting to poison his brother. I am a humble young man, Miss Riddle, but I am afeard that if you marry him you will stand but a bad chance for happiness."

She was again silent, but, after a pause, she said—

"Shawn, do you want money?"

"I thank you, Miss Riddle," he replied, "I don't want money: all I want is, that you will not be desaved by one of the most damnable villains on the face of the earth."

There was an earnestness and force of truth in what the generous young tory said that could not be mistaken. He arose, and was about to take his leave, when he said,—

"Miss Riddle, I understand he is about to be married to you to-morrow. Should he become your husband, he is safe from my hand—and that on *your* account; but as it may not yet be too late to spake, I warn you against his hypocrisy and villany—against the man who destroyed Grace Davoren—who would have killed Miss Goodwin with his Evil Eye, in order to get back the property which his uncle left her, and who would have poisoned his own brother out of his way bekase his mother told him she had changed her mind in leaving it to him (Woodward), and came to

the resolution of leaving it to his brother, and that was the raison why he attempted to poison him. All these things have been proved, and I have raison to believe that he will sleep—if sleep he can—in Waterford jail before to-morrow mornin'. But," he added, with a look which was so replete with vengeance and terror, that it perfectly stunned the girl, "perhaps he won't, though. It is likely that the fate of Grace Davoren will prevent him from it."

He did not give her time to reply, but instantly disappeared, and left her in a state of mind which our readers may very well understand.

She immediately went to her uncle's library, where the following brief dialogue occurred:

"Uncle, this marriage must not and shall not take place."

"What!" replied the peer; "then he is none of the twelve apostles."

"You are there mistaken," said she; "he is one of them. Remember Judas."

"Judas! What the deuce are you at, my dear niece?"

"Why, that he is a most treacherous villain: that's what I'm at," and her face became crimson with indignation.

"But what's in the wind? Don't keep me in a state of suspense. Judas! Confound it, what a comparison! Well, I perceive you are not disposed to become Mrs. Judas. You know me, however, well enough: I'm not going to press you to it. Do you think, my dear niece, that Judas was a gentleman?"

"Precisely such a gentleman, perhaps, as Mr. Woodward is."

"And you think he would betray Christ?"

"He would poison his brother, uncle, because he stands between him and his mother's property, which she has recently expressed her intention of leaving to that brother—a fact which awoke something like compassion in my breast for Woodward."

"Well, then, kick him to hell, the scoundrel. I liked the fellow in the beginning, and, indeed, all along, because he had badgered me so beautifully,—which I thought few persons had capacity to,—and in consequence, I entertained a high opinion of his intellect, and be hanged to him; kick him to hell, though."

"Well, my dear lord and uncle, I don't think I would be capable of kicking him so far; nor do I think it will be at all necessary, as my opinion is, that he will be able to reach that region without any assistance."

"Come, that's very well said, at all events—one of your touchers, as I call them. There, then, is an end to the match and marriage, and so be it."

She here detailed at further length the conversation which she had with *Shawn-na-Middogue;* mentioned the fact, which had somehow become well known, of his having wrought the ruin of Grace Davoren, and concluded by stating that, nothwithstanding his gentlemanly manners and deportment, he was unworthy either the notice or regard of any respectable female.

"Well," said the peer, "from all you have told me

I must say you have had a narrow escape; I did suspect him to be a fortune-hunter; but then who the deuce can blame a man for striving to advance himself in life? However, let there be an end to it, and you must only wait until a better man comes."

"I assure you, my dear uncle, I am in no hurry; so let that be your comfort so far as I am concerned."

"Well, then," said the peer, "I shall write to him to say that the marriage, in consequence of what we have heard of his character, is off."

"Take whatever steps you please," replied his admirable niece; "for most assuredly, so far as I am concerned, it *is* off. Do you imagine, uncle, that I could for a moment think of marrying a seducer and a poisoner?"

"It would be a very queer thing if you did," replied her uncle; "but was it not a fortunate circumstance that you came to discover his real character in time to prevent you from becoming the wife of such a scoundrel?"

"It was the providence of God," said his niece, "that would not suffer the innocent to become associated with the guilty."

Greatrakes, in the meantime, was hard at work He and the other magistrates had collected evidence, and received the informations against Woodward, the herbalist, and the mysterious individual who was in the habit of appearing about the Haunted House as the *Shan-dhinne-dhuv*, or the *Black Spectre*. Villany like this cannot be long concealed, and will, in due time, come to light.

During the dusk of the evening preceding Wood-

ward's intended marriage, an individual came to Mr. Lindsay's house and requested to see Mr. Woodward. That gentleman came down and immediately recognized the person who had, for such a length of time, frightened the neighborhood as the *Shan-dhinne-dhuv*, or the *Black Spectre*. He was shown into the parlor, and, as there was no one present, the following dialogue took place, freely and confidentially, between them:—

"You must fly," said the Spectre, or, in other words, the conjurer, whom we have already described, —"you must fly, for you are to be arrested this night. Our establishment for the forgery of bad notes must also be given up, and the Haunted House must be deserted. The magistrates, somehow, have smelled out the truth, and we must change our lodgings. We dodged them pretty well, but, after all, these things can't last long. On to-morrow night I bid farewell to the neighborhood; but you cannot wait so long, because on this very night you are to be arrested. It is very well that you sent Grace Davoren, at my suggestion, from the Haunted House to what is supposed to be the haunted cottage, in the mountains, where Nannie Morrissy soon joined her. I supplied them with provisions, and had a bed and other articles brought to them, according to your own instructions, and I think that, for the present, the safest place of concealment will be there."

Woodward became terribly alarmed. It was on the eve of his marriage, and the intelligence almost drove him into distraction.

"I will follow your advice," said he, "and will take

refuge in what is called the haunted cottage, for this night."

His mysterious friend now left him, and Woodward prepared to seek the haunted cottage in the mountains Poor Grace Davoren was in a painful and critical condition, but Woodward had engaged Caterine Collins to attend to her: for what object, will soon become evident to our readers.

Woodward, after night had set in,—it was a mild night with faint moonlight,—took his way towards the cottage that was supposed to be haunted, and which, in those days of witchcraft and superstition, nobody would think of entering. We have already described it, and that must suffice for our readers. On entering a dark, but level moor, he was startled by the appearance of the *Black Spectre*, which, as on two occasions before, pointed its middogue three times at his heart. He rushed towards it, but on arriving at the spot he could find nothing. It had vanished, and he was left to meditate on it as best he might.

We now pass to the haunted cottage itself. There lay Grace Davoren, after having given birth to a child; there she lay—the victim of the seducer, on the very eve of dissolution, and beside her, sitting on the bed, the unfortunate Nannie Morrissy, now a confirmed and dying maniac.

"Grace," said Nannie, "you, like me, were ruined."

"I was," replied Grace, in a voice scarcely audible.

"Ay, but you didn't murder your father, though, as I did; that's one advantage I have over you—ha! ha! ha!"

"I'm not so sure of that, Nannie," replied the dying girl; "but where's my baby?"

"O! yes, you have had a baby, but Caterine Collins took it away with her."

"My child! my child! where is my child?" she exclaimed in a low, but husky voice; "where's my child? and besides, ever since I took that bottle she gave me I feel deadly sick."

"Will I go for your father and mother—but above all things for your father? But then if he punished the villain that ruined you and brought disgrace upon your name, he might be hanged as mine was."

"Ah! Nannie," replied poor Grace; "my father won't die of the gallows; but he will of a broken heart."

"Better to be hanged," said the maniac, whose reason, after a lapse of more than a year, was in some degree returning, precisely as life was ebbing out, "bekase, thank God, there's then an end to it."

"I agree with you, Nannie, it might be only a long life of suffering; but I wouldn't wish to see my father hanged."

"Do you know," said Nannie, relapsing into a deeper mood of her mania,—"do you know that when I saw *my* father last he wouldn't nor didn't spake to me? The house was filled with people, and my little brother Frank—why now isn't it strange that I feel somehow as if I will never wash his face again nor comb his white head in order to prepare him for mass?—but whisper, Grace, sure *then I was innocent* and had not met the destroyer."

The two unhappy girls looked at each other, and if ever there was a gaze calculated to wring the human heart with anguish and with pity, it was that gaze.

Both of them were, although unconsciously, on the very eve of dissolution, and it would seem as if a kind of presentiment of death had seized upon both at the same time.

"Nannie," said Grace, "do you know that I'm afeard we're both goin' to die?"

"And why are you afeard of it?" asked Nannie. "Many a time I would 'a given the world to die."

"Why," replied Grace, who saw the deep shadows of death upon her wild, pale, but still beautiful countenance,—"why, Nannie, you have your wish—you are dying this moment."

Just as Grace spoke the unfortunate girl seemed as if she had been stricken by a spasm of the heart. She gave a slight start—turned up her beautiful, but melancholy eyes to heaven, and exclaimed, as if conscious of the moment that had come,—

"Forgive me, O God!" after which she laid herself calmly down by the side of Grace and expired. Grace, by an effort, put her hand out and felt her heart, but there was no pulsation there—it did not beat, and she saw by the utter lifelessness of her features that she was dead, and had been relieved at last from all her sorrows.

"Nannie," she said, "your start before me won't be long. I do not wish to live to show a shamed face and a ruined character to my family and the world. Nannie I am coming; but where is my child? Where is that woman who took it away? My child! Where is my child?"

Whilst this melancholy scene was taking place, another of a very different description was occurring near

the cottage. Two poachers, who were concealed in a hazel copse on the brow of a little glen beside it, saw a woman advance with an infant, which, by its cries, they felt satisfied was but newly born. Its cries, however, were soon stilled, and they saw her deposit it in a little grave which had evidently been prepared for it. She had covered it slightly with a portion of clay, but ere she had time to proceed further they pounced upon her.

"Hould her fast," said one of them, "she has murdered the infant. At all events, take it up, and I will keep her safe."

This was done, and a handkerchief, the one with which she had strangled it, was found tightly tied about its neck. That she was the instrument of Woodward in this terrible act, who can doubt? In the meantime both she and the dead body of the child were brought back to Rathfillan, where, upon their evidence, she was at once committed to prison, the handkerchief having been kept as a testimony against her, for it was at once discovered to be her own property.

During all this time Grace Davoren lay dying, in a state of the most terrible desolation, with the dead body of Nannie Morrissy on the bed beside her What had become of her child, and of Caterine Collins, she could not tell. She had, however, other reflections, for the young, but guilty mother was not without strong, and even tender, domestic affections.

"O!" she exclaimed, in her woful solitude and utter desolation, "if I only had the forgiveness of my father and mother I could die happy; but now I feel that death is upon me, and I must die alone."

A footstep was heard, and it relieved her. "O! this is Caterine," she said, "with the child."

The door opened, and the young tory, *Shawn-na-Middogue*, entered. He paused for a moment and looked about him.

"What is this?" said he, looking at the body of Nannie Morrissy; "is it death?"

"It *is* death," replied Grace, faintly; "there is *one* death, but, Shawn, there will soon be another. Shawn, forgive me, and kiss me for the sake of our early love."

"I am an outlaw," replied the stern young tory; "but I will never kiss the polluted lips of woman as long as she has breath in her body."

"But Caterine Collins has taken away my child, and has not returned with it."

"No, nor ever will," replied the outlaw. "She was the instrument of your destroyer. But I wish you to be consoled, Grace. Do you see that middogue? It is red with blood. Now listen. I have avenged you; that middogue was reddened in the heart of the villain that wrought your ruin. As far as man can be, I am now satisfied."

"My child!" she faintly said; "my child! where is it?"

Her words were scarcely audible. She closed her eyes and was silent. The outlaw looked closely into her countenance, and perceived at once that death was there. He felt her pulse, her heart, but all was still.

"Now," said he, "the penalty you have paid for your crime has taken away the pollution from your lips, and I *will* kiss you for the sake of our early love."

He then kissed her, and rained showers of tears over

her now unconscious features. The two funerals took place upon the same day; and, what was still more particular, they were buried in the same churchyard. Their unhappy fates were similar in more than one point. The selfish and inhuman seducer of each became the victim of his crime; one by the just and righteous vengeance of a heart-broken and indignant father, and the other by the middogue of the brave and noble-minded outlaw. Who the murderer of Harry Woodward, or rather the avenger of Grace Davoren, was, never became known. The only ears to which the outlaw revealed the secret were closed, and her tongue silent forever.

The body of Woodward was found the next morning lifeless upon the moors; and when death loosened the tongues of the people, and when the melancholy fate of Grace Davoren became known, there was one individual who knew perfectly well, from moral conviction, who the avenger of her ruin was.

"Uncle," said Miss Riddle, while talking with him on the subject, "I *feel* who the avenger of the unfortunate and beautiful Grace Davoren is."

"And who is he, my dear niece?"

"It shall never escape my lips, my lord and uncle."

"Egad, talking of escapes, I think you have had a very narrow one yourself, in escaping from that scoundrel of the Evil Eye."

"I thank God for it," she replied, and this closed their conversation.

There is little now to be added to our narrative. We need scarcely assure our readers that Charles Lindsay and Alice Goodwin were in due time made happy,

and that Ferdora O'Connor, who had been long attached to Maria Lindsay, was soon enabled to call her his beloved wife.

The devilish old herbalist, and his equally devilish niece, together with the conjurer and forger, who had assumed the character of the *Black Spectre*, were all hanged, through the instrumentality of Valentine Greatrakes, who had acquired so many testimonies of their villany and their crimes as enabled him, in conjunction with the other magistrates of the county, to obtain such a body of evidence against them as no jury could withstand. It was, probably, well for Woodward that the middogue of the outlaw prevented him from sharing the same fate, and dying a death of public disgrace.

Need we say that honest Barney Casey was rewarded by the love of Sarah Sullivan, who, soon after their marriage, was made housekeeper in Mr. Lindsay's family; and that Barney himself was appointed to the comfortable situation of steward over his property?

Lord Cockletown exercised all his influence with the government of the day to procure a pardon for *Shawna-Middogue*, but without effect. He furnished him, however, with a liberal sum of money, with which he left the country, but was never heard of more.

Miss Riddle was married to a celebrated barrister, who subsequently became a judge.

THE END.

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